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HUD REPORT ON HOMELESSNESS—II

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BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON
BANKING, FINANCE AND URBAN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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HUD REPORT ON HOMELESSNESS—II

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1985

House of Representatives,
Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development,
Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 9:30 a.m., in room 2128, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Henry B. Gonzalez (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Chairman Gonzalez, Representatives Oakar, Vento, Frank, Wylie, Bartlett, and Chandler.

Chairman Gonzalez. The subcommittee will please come to order.

The Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development today continues its oversight and investigatory review of the question of homelessness and with a specific reference to the Secretary's Housing and Urban Development Report on Homelessness and Emergency Shelters of last year.

Exactly 3 years ago this week this committee brought to the Nation's attention for the first time the plight of homelessness in America, which we noted, was a new type of homelessness and evocative of the depression period.

We began to see earlier that year the range of situations from entire families to heads of households living in automobiles, wandering around the country, mostly questions of unemployment that had brought about the situation of modern day homelessness. We became alarmed when with respect to other field hearings that the committee had had we discovered this corollary problem of redefining homelessness.

Coincident with that was the fact that our subcommittee was facing, since the beginning of this administration's term of office in 1981, the burden of program reductions and eliminations.

Eighty-five percent of the first budgetary presentations by this administration were in the area of jurisdiction of this committee. It has still been very dimly perceived as such. I will say for the record that at the very inception I was very, very concerned and felt that the Congress had basic questions to decide, reaffirmation or rejection of basic urban and rural housing programs and community development policies and programs, some of which had been in existence for 44 years, such things as FHA mortgage insurance or what the administration called the subsidized FHA were targeted as of February 8, 1981 for elimination, as well as Urban Development Action Grants. But the fact that that was amended, kind of took the onus of confronting the serious means for redefinition, reaffir-

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mation of these programs and policies so that finally this year there was no attempt to masquerade under the pretense of reductions.

The President's budget would eliminate all assisted housing programs, including UDAG. What is more disturbing to me is that the administration itself abandoned the one program that since 1981 had been promised as a substitute which was the Voucher Program so that in this year's budget request that was zeroed out.

The reason I am disturbed and was disturbed was that it meant that there is no commitment on any level and since the Congress has gone along on the congressional level to housing or shelter as a priority for America, it is not surprising to me that with the abandonment of this commitment we should have this phenomena, very disturbing, of homelessness.

During the course of last May's hearing, several colleagues and myself, particularly Mr. Frank from Massachusetts, strongly took issue with the conclusion that was reached by the Secretary in the report that emanated from a contract or that they had hired to make the review. Their conclusion was that at the most there would be approximately 350,000 homeless people in this country. I felt we were playing a numbers game.

I had been out in the field and in my own district. I had seen the dimensions. There was no question of whether we had 350,000 or 2 million. It was a question of what are we going to do to confront a growing problem. It is not dwindling even if you accept 350,000. Nobody debated the fact that homelessness was increasing, was not diminishing and that we had to face and confront the issue and that whether it was one American family that it should be of sufficient concern to us to be doing or attempting to do something about it.

We requested from the Department some information and materials regarding the manner in which the report was devised because our hearing had witnesses from throughout the country, from California to Arizona, Massachusetts, Texas, Florida, that were reporting to us that they were the individuals that had been quoted in this report and yet they had not said what the report attributed to them.

They said it here live and in person and for the record.

Now, the difficulty is to try to steer clear of either an argument and debate as to whose to blame and who isn't or the numbers game. The idea is to try to define, understand the dimensions of the problem. If we don't understand properly that we could hardly devise any kind of a program to confront it. During the course of this last May's hearing in 1984 that is, academic experts attacked the methodology of the report. Service providers contacted by HUD complained that information submitted by them was inadequately considered. Department witnesses did little to dissuade us from our opinion that this report was an inadequate response and a flawed effort at determining the need.

I called this hearing to get additional assessment and because we have said, as in the case of desegregation or the question of discrimination in housing, assisted housing, public housing or for that matter private housing, that these are just continuing.

They are not final and conclusive. This is a question that needs a continuing response on a sustained basis and we promised that. This is a partial fulfillment of that proposal.

This hearing is based on the fact that additional assessments, based on the materials that have been made available in the interim by the Department itself over the past year and have asked again academic experts in areas of surveying techniques to assess these materials that have been submitted to us and to again hear from service providers who submitted estimates to HUD on the number of homeless people in our communities.

In addition, we will hear from a former employee of Westat, Inc., a private research organization with whom HUD subcontracted to do a survey of communities. The subcommittee invited HUD to testify this morning but the Department believed that in providing additional materials they had contributed as much as they could to this second review of the Secretary's report.

I would hope that the Department has been as responsive to us as they could and I would hope that our witnesses can assure us that HUD has adequately responded to some of the deficiencies regarding this report that have been raised over the period of the last year.

I have no desire to get into a numbers counting game here today. We all know that homelessness is an urgent dilemma. We visited high concentration areas of homelessness in New York, in my own district of San Antonio, the Sun Belt, as they call it in San Diego, and we know that unquestionably it is a problem. The communities themselves tell us it is a problem.

What I find troublesome is the fact that the Federal Government refuses to acknowledge the extent of the national problem and based on this report does great harm to our abilities on a Federal and local level to address the urgent needs of homeless people.

This Government-sponsored study says the problem is not grave so that the Federal and local response would be minimal indeed. If it is determined here that we are not given a proper report in May or last year by the Department and their subsequent submission of materials, then it will be in order for the subcommittee to request an appearance of the Department before the subcommittee again.

I think it would be proper, again with the primary idea we could elicit a sense of urgency and commitment to confronting the need. I don't think any one of us is smart enough to have a total answer, but we do feel a responsibility to address the problem and to accept the fact that there is a problem.

[The opening statement of Chairman Gonzalez follows:]

OPENING STATEMENT FOR CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ ON THE CONTINUATION OF HEARINGS ON THE HUD REPORT OF THE HOMELESS

The Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development today continues its oversight and investigatory review of a report to the Secretary of HUD on homelessness and emergency shelters, originally issued on April 23, 1984, and on which this subcommittee along with the Subcommittee on Manpower and Housing of the House Government Operations Committee conducted a hearing on May 24, 1984.

During the course of last May's hearing I, along with my colleague from Massachusetts, Mr. Frank, strongly took issue, with the conclusions of the Secretary's report which stated that there were at the most 350,000 homeless people in this country as of January 1984, and that the study is a flawed and inadequate effort at assessing a terrible national problem. We requested from the Department information and materials regarding the manner in which the report was devised and the surveys conducted. Information was submitted to this subcommittee in late 1984 and again in March of this year when Secretary Pierce appeared before us and again as recently as November 27 in response to my letter to the Department re questioning specific information that had come to our attention that had not been available in earlier materials submitted to the subcommittee.

During the course of last May's hearing academic experts attacked the methodology of the report. Service providers contacted by HUD complained that information submitted by them was inadequately considered. Department witnesses did little to dissuade us from our opinion that this report was an inadequate response and a flawed effort at determining need.

I called this hearing to get an additional assessment based on the materials that have been made available to us by the Department over the past year and have asked again academic experts in the areas of surveying techniques to access the materials that have been submitted to us and to again hear from service providers who submitted estimates to HUD on the number of homeless people in our communities. In addition, we will hear from a former employee of Westat, Inc., a private research organization with whom HUD subcontracted to do a survey of communities. The subcommittee invited HUD to testify this morning, but the Department believed that in providing additional materials they had contributed as much as they could to this second review of the Secretary's report. I would hope that the Department has been as responsive to us as they could and I would hope that our witnesses can assure us that HUD has adequately responded to some of the deficiencies regarding this report that have been raised over a period of the past year.

I have no desire to get into a numbers counting game here today. We all know that homelessness is a urgent dilemma. All we have to do is to open our eyes as we walk our community's streets. What I find most troublesome is the fact that the Federal Government refuses to acknowledge the extent of the national problem, and based on this report does great harm to our abilities on a Federal and local level to address the urgent needs of homeless people. This Government-sponsored study says the problem is not grave, so that the Federal and local responses would be minimal indeed.

If it is determined here that we were not given a proper report in May of last year by the Department and their subsequent submission of materials, then it will be in order of the subcommittee to request the appearance of the Department before the subcommittee again.

I appreciate the time that our witnesses have given to analyzing the data and information and look forward to their report to us.

Chairman **GONZALEZ**. I appreciate the time that our witnesses have given to analyze the data and information, look forward to the report to us, and at this time recognize our most distinguished minority ranking member of the full committee, Mr. Chalmers Wylie.

Mr. **WYLIE**. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

It will, of course, come as no surprise we have a little different perspective as to the commitment of the administration with reference to providing decent housing for low- and moderate-income people but I did like your statement in that you said we don't want to engage in pointing fingers but rather we want to work together to try to solve a problem.

In that connection, Mr. Chairman, I would commend you for your leadership on this issue of homelessness in America. Since you took over the helm of this subcommittee, we have had several hearings pertaining to the problem of homelessness and it is a very, very important issue.

Also, Mr. Chairman, I would commend our colleague, Mr. Vento, who has been in the forefront of the proposed legislation which I have been happy to cosponsor to deal with some of the problems of homelessness. The subject of today's hearing is, of course, to continue the investigation into the manner in which the HUD report on homelessness was put together and the resulting impact of that report on Federal and local efforts to address the problem of homelessness.

The primary focus of the HUD report was to examine the characteristics of the homeless to determine what was being done for them in various communities across the country and to access existing estimates to obtain a better sense of the scope of the problem.

Unfortunately, the numbers controversy has obscured the impact of some of the more significant aspects of the HUD report as you mentioned. I would like to remind my colleagues that the report went far beyond the numbers and did provide a thorough analysis of the characteristics of those who are homeless in order that Federal, State, and local policymakers can determine what shelter and services for the homeless could be tailored more effectively to their needs.

These aspects of the HUD study went undisputed throughout our previous hearing.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I believe we should get away from arguing over how many angels can dance on the head of a pin and in that regard I ask unanimous consent to insert in the record of today's hearing a column that appeared in the Los Angeles Times on July 18, 1985, entitled "How Many Homeless? The Numbers Game is Ridiculous," by Anna Kondratas.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. Without objection, so ordered.

[The article which appeared in the Los Angeles Times on July 18, 1985, follows:]

How Many Homeless? The Numbers Game Is Ridiculous

(By S. Anna Kondratas)

According to many articles and studies, the current number of homeless in America is anywhere from a "low" of 250,000 or 350,000 to 2 million or 3 million, or more. And, the experts say, homelessness is increasing at anywhere from 10% to 38% per year.

What should we make of these figures, and the wide discrepancies between the high and low estimates?

To begin with, it should be understood that the only reason anything can be "proved" with numbers is because most people do not bother thinking through what the numbers really mean. Whether out of laziness or lack of aptitude, they prefer to judge figures by their opinions of those who use them.

Nowhere can this be seen more clearly than in the highly charged atmosphere of the debate over homelessness, where numbers cease being neutral data to aid understanding and take on new life as political statements.

For example, since the "low" estimates that I have cited are from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (aha! the Reagan Administration) and the high estimates are from "homeless advocacy groups," the Administration numbers are almost automatically disputed, while the higher numbers are accepted as an article of faith.

But it's not so simple—not, that is, if you are interested in fact. The Washington-based Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV), an advocacy group for the homeless, prepared a report for a congressional hearing in 1980 that contained very sketchy information on shelters in about 25 locales and the number of homeless in 14 cities.

Methodological quibbles about the HUD report pale into insignificance when the reader searches in vain in the CCNV report for any recognition that there are such things as research standards. Some estimates appear to be for metropolitan areas, cities and suburbs alike; others for cities only. Some appear to be point-in-time counts—the number of a given day); others are annual counts.

I could go on, but the bottom line is that the Community for Creative Non-Violence data are useless as a means of extrapolating the number of America's homeless. In fact, no homeless total appears in the 1980 report.

However, a 1982 version of the "study," greatly expanded with the addition of an anti-Reagan Administration diatribe, claimed that the original report provided the information to support the conclusion that there were 2.2 million homeless in 1980. No further documentation was provided. This is the only source that purports to have documented the figure of 2 million to 3 million homeless. When pressed, Mitch Snyder, head of the CCNV, has admitted, ". . . These numbers are in fact meaningless"—although in the same breath he insists that they're as good as any others.

The 1984 HUD report is actually the only serious national study of homelessness that has been written to date. It was done by professional social scientists—civil servants whose tenure at HUD predated the Reagan Administration. Their sources were advocates for the homeless, local social-service providers and shelter operators, and numerous local studies. Indeed, for the 10 cities that were included in both the CCNV and the HUD reports, one HUD data-gathering method produced higher local estimates than the highest CCNV guesses in seven of the 10 cities.

Why the total differences? Obviously the HUD people take addition and multiplication seriously. But you don't need sophisticated research techniques to see that the figure of 2.2 million homeless in 1980—a 1% national rate—is preposterous. It has become conventional wisdom only through repetition.

For example, if we assume that Metropolitan New York had a 1% homeless rate in 1980, it would mean that there were 91,000 homeless in New York. Increasing this by 10% per year (remember, that's the "low" rate of increase) leads to the inescapable conclusion that New York today has at least 147,000 homeless people. If New York state had a 1% homeless rate in 1980, it had 176,000 homeless people then and has at least 284,000 now. Los Angeles would have 121,000 homeless. Chicago would have 114,000.

There is not a single local estimate suggesting that homelessness is remotely near such figures. And if New York, Los Angeles and Chicago didn't have a 1% rate in 1980, it is absurd to claim that the nation had a 1% average rate. Why has no one noticed? Why do otherwise serious scholars and journalists repeat such numbers? Have the politics of confrontation turned our brains to mush?

Homelessness is a serious problem—actually, an array of problems—that must be addressed in a spirit of cooperation and trust at federal, state and local levels. We can legitimately argue about causes and solutions. But when an absurd number is thrown down as a gauntlet, we should be sensible enough to see it for what it is.

With all due respect for Mitch Snyder's "consciousness-raising" role, it is time to move away from the chutzpah and hysteria approach toward facts and hard analysis. Snyder can believe that numbers are meaningless if he wants to, but public policy can't be made on such a basis.

———

(S. Anna Kondratas is the Schultz Fellow in Health and Urban Affairs at the Heritage Foundation in Washington.)

Mr. Wylie. I thank you. Again, Mr. Chairman, I would commend you for your leadership on this issue and look forward to the hearing this morning and to listening to our witnesses.

Chairman Gonzalez. Thank you very much, Mr. Wylie. I sincerely and deeply appreciate that.

Mr. Vento truly was a first on the congressional level that I remember was pushing for this action on the issue of homelessness. I believe that in his area he noticed this growing problem and he rightfully should be attributed the initiator at least on a congressional level and I am sure on a local level of seeking some action to overcome this problem.

Mr. Vento.

Mr. Vento. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am pleased that you have called today's hearings and continue to focus attention on the growing problem of homelessness in our Nation. Clearly, the study that was done was not adequate to the task. I think that the committee has had a good record of working on a bipartisan basis on what is a very serious problem and I think in spite of the fact that the House of Representatives, this committee specifically, has on numerous occasions, and in an individual instance, authorized legislation, we have not been successful in winning the support of the administration, so I think we are rightfully concerned about the efforts that they have put in place to try to define this problem, especially if we feel that it is ill-defined.

I think as we look across our Nation we realize the growing incidents of this problem of people without adequate shelter. The source of this problem is not a singular source, not just the lack of public housing or deinstitutionalization or the change in employment, but it is a multiple source type problem.

I think we should be responding to that. I would hope the modest proposals we pass would receive some support from the Senate and from the administration in light of the problem and I want to commend you and the other members of the committee for the support that this issue has received when it has been brought before this committee.

I hope that this will be a positive hearing. I want to apologize in advance because I have to leave for the consideration of bills before my other committee responsibilities, but I do commend you for it.

I think it is an apropos time when the public's attention is focused on this and I hope the results of this will be positive in terms of seeking a national policy and defining a national policy that will help those that are in the situation of being homeless across this Nation.

Thank you for your support in the past and for this hearing today.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Thank you, Mr. Vento.

Again, the record should show that you were there at the very beginning and brought our attention to it. I want to thank you for your contribution.

Mr. Bartlett, do you have any statement you would like to make?

Our first panel consists of Dr. Richard Appelbaum, a professor of sociology, University of California, at Santa Barbara, CA, and Dr. Eugene Eriksen, professor of sociology at Temple University in Philadelphia.

We will recognize Dr. Appelbaum first.

RICHARD APPELBAUM, PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA BARBARA, CA

Mr. APPELBAUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am a professor of sociology at the University of California. I have been involved in the study of housing, housing-related issues, and housing markets for some 15 to 20 years going back to consultancy I did with the Government of Peru and 15 years as an urban sociologist at the University of California.

In May 1984, I testified before this committee concerning the HUD report. At that time I uncovered what I believed to be a key problem with the methods which HUD used to arrive at its figures, a problem which underlie three of the four methods it used to arrive at its estimations.

What HUD had done was to gather data by various approaches, estimate the number of homeless, apply those data to a population base and then to project or to extrapolate to a national figure. In any method of projection the population base that you use is obviously of critical importance.

In its first method, and we have a chart here, HUD simply gathered data from 37 metropolitan areas provided for which studies had been done, and extended that to a national figure.

The second method involved the sample of 60 metropolitan areas and three size stratas, small, medium, and large—large being over 1 million in population; medium being 250,000 to 1,000,000. HUD estimated the homeless in those metropolitan areas and then once again extended it to a national figure by expressing the number of homeless as a percentage of the underlying population base.

The third involved a survey of shelter operators by the Westat Corp. under subcontract to HUD. This was believed by HUD to be the most reliable estimate since the shelter operators presumably were the most expert in providing this data. Once again the numbers which were obtained were applied to an underlying population base and projected.

Now, the thing which struck me when I began to look into this was the underlying population base was not a base with which I was familiar. It was not the standard metropolitan statistical area or SMSA.

They weren't counties or cities. They were, in fact, Ranally metropolitan areas.

Those are commercial marketing areas developed by the Rand McNally Corp. for purposes of marketing, business, and commerce. They are extremely large areas, highly urbanized. Over here we have a map, Thomas Brother's map of the Los Angeles metropolitan area, which I have brought simply to illustrate the size of these areas. The Los Angeles area here involves 10.6 million people. It extends over five counties of which only three really are depicted here.

I think you can hear me OK if I point or will this pick up for the record?

Do I have to stay in front of this microphone?

Chairman GONZALEZ. Yes; if you will be a little bit louder than usual, I am sure—the main thing is to have the reporter hear you well.

Mr. APPELBAUM. This is the Ranally metropolitan area that includes all or parts of five counties, Los Angeles County, which is this large area in the middle, Ventura County, only a part of which is visible up here to the west, Orange County down here, San Bernardino County over here and because the Thomas Broker map does not include it, also Riverside County which is over here.

I will return to this map in detail when I discuss Los Angeles but the point I am trying to make is that this is obviously an enormous area. The Los Angeles RMA contains some 88 cities spread out over five counties and encompasses 10.6 million people.

So, when I first saw this the question which I asked was how in the world could anybody have gathered all this data for an area so large, so geographically dispersed and with so many jurisdictions, all of which gathered data in their own particular manner.

The New York City RMA, which is the Nation's largest, is 16.6 million people spread out over 74 cities and 3 States and 24 counties so you can see that the problems are significant.

They are significant because the city of Los Angeles in this example contains only approximately one-third of the total RMA population. If HUD went out and gathered data for the city of Los Angeles and then said that that data applied in fact to the entire RMA, obviously they would underestimate the incident of homelessness by a factor of three, which would lead to substantial underestimation when they aggregated to a national figure.

If the committee is interested, I actually brought all the way from California a copy of the Rand McNally atlas which contains the maps. I hope somebody is interested, because it weighs a lot. You can get an idea for the other RMA's which were studied, their size, geographical scope and so forth. At the time I testified before this committee last time I didn't really have any evidence on which to conclude that HUD had not adequately covered the RMA's because the published report does not contain that kind of information.

I had a hunch. It didn't seem logical they could have covered the entire RMA, but I had no evidence. Since that time the evidence has been made available to me under the Freedom of Information Act in the form of the actual survey instruments for the 20 largest metropolitan areas, that is, those metropolitan areas of 1 million people or over.

I have gone through those questionnaires and that is what I want to report to you today. Specifically, let me tell you what I want to show you very briefly. I will summarize my testimony since you have a written version of it.

First, that the HUD interviews were almost always limited to a subset of places within each RMA rather than covering the entire RMA. Second, that those people interviewed very likely in almost all cases, if not all cases, believed they were responding in terms of not the entire RMA or metropolitan area, but rather the central city or cities and occasionally outlying counties. But the respondents were simply not thinking in terms of RMA's which very few people, in fact, have heard of.

Finally, where HUD did gather data for more than one city or county within an RMA, they did not systematically aggregate that data to go for a single estimate. So, to summarize, my objective is to try to demonstrate that HUD did not really cover the RMA's in any systematic or complete detail, but rather, by and large, gathered their data for a subset of places within each RMA and then simply applied those figures to the entire underlying population base which results in a numerator which is much smaller than the denominator warrants.

The results are an estimate of the ratio or percentage of homeless, which I believe is low given the RMA population base. Again, since HUD then aggregates those data to a national figure, this leads to an underestimation by an undetermined amount of the national homeless population.

What I am going to do specifically is this. First, I want to discuss the 20 largest RMA's in general terms, in terms of their size, their jurisdictional complexity and so forth just to indicate how difficult the data gathering has to be. In reference to that I will also talk about the number of interviews which HUD completed for these RMA's and try to argue they simply did not cover these given the limited number of interviews that were conducted.

I will then go over two case studies in detail simply to illustrate, to make concrete what I am talking about—New York City and Los Angeles, the two largest RMA's, although I am prepared to talk about others if the committee is interested and has the time.

Then finally, I simply want to address a couple of other issues of methodological carelessness on HUD's part having to do with the way they recorded their figures and also the Westat study, for which I saw the computer printout for the first time. I have a few comments to make on that.

So, let me begin then by talking about homelessness in the 20 largest metropolitan areas taken together. Remember, I am restricting my remarks to the 20 largest.

Table 1, which I have on the wall and which is also at the back of the report which I prepared for you, summarizes the RMA population in reference to county and city population and expresses the latter two as a percentage of the formula. These 20 RMA's, the largest metropolitan areas, have a combined population of approximately 78.3 million people.

That is to say, one out of every three Americans live in these 20 RMA's. These are not just 20 cities taken across the country, these account for a third of the national population. They are extremely large.

The HUD sample by design includes the six largest—New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Detroit. Those were taken and then the remaining 14 were randomly sampled. Table 1 indicates that the RMA's are much larger than the underlying counties or the cities. For example, the counties comprise roughly half the population of the 20 largest RMA's taken together and the cities comprise approximately a third of the combined RMA population. I make this point only to illustrate that if, in fact, HUD gathered data for cities and counties and then assumed that it was for RMA, they underestimated by a factor of 2 to 3.

That is summarized in table 1. Table 2 up there on the wall and in your report summarizes the number of jurisdictions in each RMA. The 20 largest RMA's have 455 cities among them, 455 cities in 141 counties spread out over 42 States. Each RMA averages 7 counties and 22 cities. Once again, this is to show you that these are jurisdictionally complex inputs for which no systematic data gathering is typically conducted.

They are not cities, they are not counties, they are large aggregates which again raises the question how could HUD hope to cover these areas through a limited number of interviews?

In table 3, I in fact, turn to a summary of the interviews. This table is based on my count of the questionnaires which were provided to me. But table 3 indicates—let me backtrack for a moment. HUD claims in its report to have conducted over 500 interviews for all 60 RMA's.

On page 12 I believe HUD says that it averaged 10 to 12 interviews for each of the 20 largest RMA's. These, by the way, are

RMA's which average 23 cities each, so even on the face of it it is unclear how 10 to 12 interviews cover areas which cover the average of 23 cities.

What you see in table 3 is that HUD actually conducted 285 interviews for which it obtained 207 point-in-time estimates, roughly three out of four. So that works out to approximately 10 per RMA.

Now there is tremendous variation on this however. Twelve, for example, of the 20 provided 8 or more estimates, but 8 of the 20 provided 7 or fewer estimates. There is tremendous variability as you can see in table 3. For example, Baltimore provided four estimates to HUD. Nine interviews were conducted but only four were willing to provide point-in-time estimates of homelessness.

The largest is Los Angeles in which 46 interviews were conducted, 35 of which provided estimates, 35 for 88 cities. There is again tremendous variability, but a significant proportion, approximately half, provided fewer than the 8 which HUD claims was its range—8 to 12.

If you look at the questionnaire which HUD used, and that is contained as exhibit 1 in my report, you find the first question which the HUD researchers asked is, "How serious a problem is homelessness in your city," and then the city was named. There is no reference in the questionnaire to metropolitan area.

There is certainly no reference to RMA and I believe that many of the people thought they were responding in terms of the city and I think some of the witnesses later on today will, in fact, make that point, but the general point I want to make is that HUD nowhere defined the territory it was talking about. It nowhere drew RMA boundaries for the people it talked to, who then responded in terms of cities that best contain a third of the population of the RMA's.

What I would like to do now is very briefly give you two case studies by way of illustration, Los Angeles and New York. The Los Angeles RMA, as I said before, has a population of 10.6 million people spread out over parts of five counties, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura. I should also mention that the Los Angeles RMA has 88 cities. Los Angeles is a mosaic, sort of an urbanist's nightmare, because it is spread out all over the place, containing many conflicting jurisdictions. It also has vast unincorporated areas which are extremely urbanized and which presumably contain homeless people as well. HUD conducted no interviews in the Ventura County portion of the RMA nor did it conduct any interviews in Long Beach which is a major industrial metropolitan subdivision of Los Angeles with close to 400,000 people. It sought information but Long Beach provided it with none.

This little area right here which I have colored in—it might not be visible, is skid row in Los Angeles which is a downtown area bounded by several freeways and HUD obtained a number of estimates for skid row. This area right here in white spread out all over the place is the city of Los Angeles which contains a number of islands and then each one of these different colors represents a different city.

Again, to repeat what I said before, we only go into part of the San Bernardino County up here. We don't even reach Riverside County on this map nor do we reach into Thousand Oaks nor Simi Valley nor Ventura County. This map is primarily Los Angeles County and Orange County.

Let's talk first about Los Angeles County. HUD conducted 25 interviews which were intended to cover a population of 7.5 million people in the Los Angeles County portion alone spread out over 53 cities in the urbanized unincorporated area. If you look over the questionnaires, and I brought them along with me if anyone is interested in doing so, HUD regarded only 3 or 4 of the interviews of the 25 interviews as primary sources for Los Angeles. Those are Ocean Park Community Center, supervisor Dana's Office, Los Angeles Legal Services, and possibly the L.A. Department of Community Services.

All those converge on an estimate of approximately 30,000. The others, according to the marginal notations on the questionnaire and on summary questionnaires HUD prepared, are not regarded as terribly reliable. Rather than 25 interviews, instead 4 interviews are principally used for an L.A. county area which encompasses 7.5 million people in 53 cities.

Now, how good even are these reliable estimates? Well, the L.A. Department of Community Services provides a range on a line—where they are asked to provide a range—of 25,000 to 50,000. Then there is a marginal notation, "30,000 not a bad estimate." That to me does not sound like a scientific study.

I don't fault the people who provided the data. They didn't have the data. They merely said what seemed reasonable. But it is not reasonable in the sense that their estimate was derived from a city-by-city study on the part of HUD, and that is the point which I want to make here.

Even though HUD gathered data for the entire county, it did not do so by going out to each city in the county. It simply took at face value a handful of estimates—of doubtful reliability—which referred presumably to the entire county.

I should also point out that HUD rejected all estimates in its calculation that were substantially higher than 30,000. For example, Los Angeles Legal Services provided an estimate of 30,000, 50,000, for which HUD has the notation, rejected "because of ambiguity," and a figure of 25,000 is substituted instead.

The Redevelopment Agency of the city of Los Angeles provided an estimate also of 30 to 50,000, rejected as "speculative." Los Angeles Times provides a figure of 15,000 to 20,000 where it is supposed to provide the range of estimates but then there is a marginal notation, "25,000 L.A. County," which suggests that the Los Angeles Times thought it was referring to the city when it provided its lower estimate, and then corrected itself in saying "25,000 L.A. County."

HUD, however, uses the 15,000 to 20,000 figure, the lower figure, even though it is presumably an estimate for the entire county. What about Orange County?

Well, in Orange County, HUD sought six estimates. Only three provided point-in-time estimates. Orange County contains 28 cities incidentally. So there were three estimates for Orange County which range from 4,000 to 6,000. It is interesting to note that the YWCA provided an estimate of 4,000 women alone. That figure was not adjusted for how many men might be found homeless in relation to the number of women. From the very detailed count in Boston that was done, which is contained in the summary of the last hearings, we know that approximately there are four to five men homeless, at least in the city of Boston, for every woman. So if, in fact, there were 4,000 women homeless in Orange County, as the YWCA claimed, there might be 16,000 to 20,000 men, but that is not taken into account.

So to summarize my points for the Los Angeles RMA, HUD really based their estimates on maybe 6 to 8 interviews, which they regarded as reliable. Not the 36 which were conducted but 6 to 8 which they really think are good sources.

This for an area which embraces 88 different cities and over 10 million people. In my view those are also guesses because none of them represents any kind of a hard count. They are all basically guesses. I should also point out there is tremendous variation on these estimates. If you add together, as I did, all the estimates for all the sources for the Los Angeles RMA, the range is 15,100 to 62,500. Now, statisticians say that indicates there is a high variance in the estimates which means that any individual estimate is of very low reliability.

Let me now talk about the New York RMA a little closer to Washington and interesting because of its enormous size. New York contains 16.5 million people spread out over portions of New York State, New Jersey, and Connecticut. It includes 24 cities and 74 counties. Now, in a summary document which HUD prepared, HUD claims to have conducted, quote, "about 60 interviews in both the city and suburbs." About 60 interviews. Kathleen Peroff, then Deputy Director of HUD's Department of Policy and Development, in her sworn statement of July 12, 1984, claimed—and I will read you her quote—

> Forty interviews were held with people knowledgeable about specific urban areas. In order to obtain estimates of homelessness in each of the separate jurisdictions, these were then added to the New York City estimate to arrive at an estimate for the entire metropolitan area.

So Kathleen Peroff said 40 interviews were conducted. Let me tell you what I found in the New York City data. First of all, looking at New York City itself, in the five boroughs or the five counties of Manhattan, Queens, Richmond, Bronx and Kings or Brooklyn, HUD did not in fact go out and interview providers of the homeless in that area. Rather, they used the following method.

First, they gathered shelter data from all the city's shelters. Next, they went to the Partnership for the Homeless and gathered shelter data for all the private shelters. Then they estimated the number of street people, the quote for the documents which were made available to me is as follows: "data from city outreach programs showed that 44 percent of those contacted refused to go to shelters."

In other words, HUD took a study from the city outreach programs which claims that 56 percent of the homeless are in shelters and 44 percent didn't go to shelters. They then work backward. If 56 percent of homeless are in shelters and if we know the number in shelters we can by simple arithmetic calculate the number on the streets.

They use figures for singles in shelters only because HUD assumed there are no married homeless on the streets, that all married homeless are in shelters.

Now, a lot hinges on this. We are talking about New York City proper, an area of over 7 million people. We are guessing at the number of street homeless on the basis of undocumented sources which contend that 56 percent of the homeless wind up in shelters.

I would want to take a long, hard look at these "data from outreach programs" before I conclude that the surveys are reliable. By whom were the surveys conducted? Over what parts of New York City, Manhattan, the five boroughs, what section? What time of the year were they conducted? There is a lot that has to be answered.

So to get its estimate for the number of homeless in New York City proper HUD counts 6,961 singles in shelters, it finds 8,150 family members in shelters also by count, finds 5,500 on the street by the estimation procedure I mentioned, it finds zero family members on the streets by assumption, and it finds 2,000 in abandoned buildings—the marginal notation there is "information provided by a building official." This leads to 22,611 homeless in New York City proper.

For the reasons that I have indicated, I don't trust this figure. The shelter information is clearly hard information but the street people estimate is pure guess work in my view. Now, what about what HUD calls the suburbs of New York, which include everything outside of the five boroughs? Those suburbs include 9.5 million people in 3 States, 19 counties and 69 cities.

How many interviews did HUD actually conduct to gather data for those areas, those 69 cities? Well, HUD conducted 35 interviews of which 17 provided point-in-time estimates so now we are down from 60 as HUD claimed, we are down from 40 as Kathleen Peroff claimed, we are down to 17 for a non-New York City population of very close to 10 million people.

These address only 6 of the 19 suburban counties. There were three interviews completed in Essex County which includes Newark. There were three interviews out of six completed in Westchester County. There were 4 interviews out of 10 in Nassau County out on Long Island. There were three completed out of three sought in Suffolk County, two out of three in Bergen County and two out of three in Passaic County.

That is six counties with 59 percent of the noncity population so even under the best of assumptions 41 percent of the population in some 13 counties were simply ignored by HUD in their coverage of the New York City RMA. I don't believe that even these estimates are reliable.

If you combine, for example, the estimates for all of these suburbs, you come up with a range of 1,850 to 15,050. That is an enormous range, a factor of nearly 10.

I won't go on a county-by-county basis, but if you are interested, I can do that also for you. There is tremendous variability in the estimates. Furthermore, HUD did not base its results on all these estimates because it acknowledges in a summary that because of considerations the final estimate is based on a reduced number.

For example, there are only two reliable sources from Essex County. HUD relies on the Salvation Army and the police department. Two reliable sources from Nassau County, St. Vincent's and one other—I can't read my notations here—and one source from Westchester County from Legal Aid. Thus five sources essentially provide the most reliable estimates for the suburban portion of the New York City RMA, an area of 9.5 million people. As I said, I will be glad to go through Chicago, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and so on, but I will leave that unless you request it of me.

Let me draw this portion together, make some conclusions and then briefly comment on a couple of other things.

The first conclusion is that data is obviously, as we say, extremely soft. There is tremendous variability among estimates for the same jurisdiction and there are very few hard counts, body counts. In other words, low reliability, much guess work.

Second, there is a complete failure to cover the entire RMA, rather, only portions of the RMA were covered, often cities, sometimes counties, but never the entire RMA and insofar as county information was relied upon, I doubt its accuracy because most counties simply don't go out and gather data for the many cities which lie within their jurisdiction. Like the rest of us, counties rely on data that others provide, and none of their cities—or very few of their cities—had conducted any kind of hard counts.

The third conclusion is that HUD's questionnaire was misleading because nowhere do they refer to RMA when they go out and ask people to estimate the number of homeless. The word they use is city and presumably in some cases county. They never even use the word metropolitan and to the extent that informants thought they were talking about cities as opposed to RMA's, substantial underestimation occurred.

Let me conclude by pointing out a couple of other problems. First is the simple problem of sloppiness. I have two illustrations of that. One, HUD provided a worksheet which is exhibit 3 in the paper I have written where they have the actual numbers they use to compute the homeless ratios for the 20 largest RMA's. Simply going through that I uncovered a number of errors which are worth mentioning.

First, they use a figure of 26,472 for both the low and the high estimates for the New York RMA. They actually should have used 26,000 and 30,000 according to their own figures.

I don't know how that figure got in there.

Second, they have reversed the columns of low and high figures for five of the RMA's, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Portland, San Francisco, and Washington. They simply carelessly put the low estimate in the high column and the high estimate in the low column which, of course affects the totals.

Now, I have recalibrated the table and it does not make a great deal of difference but it does indicate a certain tendency toward what I would regard as fast and dirty work on their part.

Third, if you look at the questionnaires, they are quite interesting. Some of the questionnaires are extremely detailed and exhaustive but most of them are almost illegible, very sloppy with marginal notations which even HUD had difficulty interpreting when they prepared their summary documents for us.

So I think that they were quite careless in their method and personally when I see carelessness on the raw instruments, I assume that there is carelessness down the line when the data is finally compiled into the very clean final results which mask what underlies those results.

Finally, I want to say a couple of words about the Westat study because the Westat study was the hardest study which HUD did. The Westat people are professionals, as we know. They have done a lot of work for HUD in the past. HUD says, quote, "these were the more scientifically sound procedures." That was Mr. Bobo's testimony before this committee. So I think it is worth looking at the Westat figure which provides the third estimate.

First of all, it is interesting to note that the published report simply contains the final Westat figure, 353,000. It does not break the Westat figure down into RMA's. It simply provides the aggregate. However, I have seen the breakdown into RMA's in a computer printout which was prepared for me, I believe, by HUD—it could have been Westat—which is contained as exhibit 4, and that computer printout does in fact contain the detailed breakdowns for each of the 20 largest RMA's that Westat did.

This is the survey of shelter operators which Westat believed was most reliable since shelter operators know the most about homelessness and Westat tells us when more than one estimate was obtained they were simply added and averaged. In table 4, the stringes of nines, like 999998, are missing data. Those are cases where Westat, where the shelter operators simply refused to provide the information. Well, this is quite interesting. First of all, if you add this up there is an extremely low response rate. For the 20 largest RMA's, only 64 point-in-time estimates were provided for all 20 metropolitan areas.

That works out to an average of three per metropolitan area. So now HUD's most reliable source of information, the Westat study, is taking an average of 3 per metropolitan area, not 40 or 60, but 3.

However, even this average hides the reality of the Westat study because the average is distorted by New York City for which 11 estimates were contained. All of their other cities had fewer than five estimates. For example, Pittsburgh, Miami, and Hartford had one estimate each, one shelter operator provided Westat with the estimate of the homeless for those RMA's.

For Chicago, Boston, Baltimore, Cleveland, Detroit, and Kansas City, two estimates. Chicago, the second largest—excuse me—the third largest RMA in the United States, three shelter operator estimates provided the basis for the Westat study. Los Angeles, the second largest RMA, three estimates. Now maybe three estimates is OK if the responses are in fact extremely accurate, but they are not accurate.

For example, the two estimates provided for Baltimore are 10,500 and 20,000, two estimates that differ by a factor of two. Westat presumably took the average.

Obviously those are not reliable estimates if they vary between 10,000 and 20,000.

Chicago, two estimates for the entire Chicago RMA. The two Westat estimates are 2,000 and 10,000, a five fold variation. And Los Angeles, 25,000, 26,000, and 40,000, and so on down the line.

This is all summarized in the last table of my report. So once again, the Westat figures I believe are absolutely no more reliable than the HUD figures. There are very few of them for very large RMA's and when Westat does obtain more than one figure, the figures vary all over the place.

Furthermore, if you compare the Westat figures for individual cities with the other estimate, which I just reviewed—HUD's own estimate—they don't look like the former in any way.

Baltimore, for example, in the method that HUD itself uses on its own questionnaires, which I went into in detail, HUD's reliable range is 630 to 750. The Westat range for Baltimore is 10,500 to 20,000. Those two estimates don't look anything like each other.

Similar problems occur with Cincinnati, Detroit, Hartford, Miami, Philadelphia, Phoenix, San Francisco, and Seattle. That is to say, the Westat estimates for individual RMA's in no way resemble the HUD estimates so I conclude both of those estimates are pure guess work and I think the guess work substantially underestimates the number of homeless.

That concludes my remarks. I will be glad to answer any questions or go over cities in more detail if the committee desires.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Appelbaum follows:]

Prepared Statement of Dr. Richard P. Appelbaum, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of California, Santa Barbara

In May 1984 I testified before this committee regarding the HUD Report on Homelessness.[1] At that time I identified a key problem with the HUD's research methodology: HUD had apparently gathered estimates on homelessness for selected cities, and then proceeded as if those estimates applied to much larger metropolitan areas. Specifically, the HUD researchers conducted interviews in 60 metropolitan areas, selected so as to constitute a sample of three different size strata of places[2]. The 60 areas were in fact Ranally Metropolitan Areas, or RMAs--extremely large units developed by Rand McNally for use in their annual atlas of market areas.[3] The RMAs include central cities and outlying suburbs; they cut across city, county, and in some cases even state boundaries.

At the time of my previous testimony, I suspected that HUD had erred by limiting its interviews to one or two central cities in each RMA, while assuming that their estimates applied to the entire RMA. Such a method would significantly under-estimate homeless rates for each RMA, since it would ignore the homeless in each RMA who are found outside of those few cities. Since HUD then used the homeless rates from the sample places to derive a national estimate, it follows that the latter figure would be correspondingly low. By way of example, the New York City RMA includes some 74 cities in 24 counties across 3 states; it has a total population (1980) of 16.6 million people. New York City itself, by way of contrast, has 7.1 million people--only 43% of the RMA total. Los Angeles, the second largest RMA, is even more dispersed than New York, with 10.6 million people living in 88 cities in 5 counties; the Los Angeles City population is less than one-third of the total. Clearly it makes a major difference whether HUD's estimates of homelessness for the New York RMA were derived for the central cities alone, the entire RMA, or something in between.

In my testimony today I will re-examine these issues, in light of the raw data--primarily questionnaires--that have been made available to me through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). I will focus on the largest size stratum (RMAs of over a million people), because I believe that is where HUD's chief problems lie. I will show that the HUD interviews were generally limited to a subset of cities within each RMA, and that the interviewees generally believed they were talking about their immediate city--and not the entire RMA. I will also show that where HUD gathered information for more than one city within the larger RMAs, they did not do so systematically, nor did they adequately aggregate the separate estimates into a single total for the entire RMA.

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[1] *A Report to the Secretary on the Homeless and Emergency Shelters*, hereafter referred to as the HUD Report.

[2] The three strata are 50,000-250,000; 250,000-1,000,000; and over 1,000,000.

[3] *Rand McNally, Commercial Atlas and Marketing Guide* (Chicago). Rand McNally defines RMA's as including "(1) a central city or cities; (2) any adjascent continuously built-up areas; and (3) other communities not connected to the city by a continuously built-up area if the bulk of their population [8% of the population or 20% of the labor force] is supported by commuters to the central city and its adjascent built-up areas." Rand McNally has identified 394 RMA's in the United States.

I will begin with a discussion of the size of the population and large number of political jurisdictions in each RMA, two factors which make data-gathering extremely difficult. I will then discuss the number of interviews that HUD actually completed, and show that these are insufficient to provide adequate coverage. Finally, several case studies will then be reviewed in some detail, to highlight the flaws in HUDs research methodolgy. I will conclude with a review of some other difficulties with the HUD study, primarily concerning the Westat survey of shelter operators.

It is important to bear in mind that I am focusing on only *one* of the problems with the HUD Report--its method of data collection, which contributes to a national homeless estimate that undercounts by a substantial margin. There are other problems with the Report--problems which I identified in my previous testimony, and which will be addressed by other speakers today. Chief among these, in my view, is the HUD definition of homelessness, which excludes people who are doubling up, sleeping on neighbor's floors, living in vehicles, or are otherwise "officially" invisible. I shall focus today only on the narrow technical issues associated with HUD's use of RMAs.

Homelessness in 20 Large Metropolitan Areas

Population Characteristics of RMAs

Table 1 summarizes the population characteristics for the 20 RMAs with a population greater than one million. These 20 RMAs alone have a combined 1980 census population of 78.3 million--over one-third (34.5%) of the total national population of 227.2 million. One out of every three Americans live in these 20 RMAs. By design, the HUD sample includes *all* six RMA's with over four million people: New York (16.6 million), Los Angeles (10.6 million), Chicago (7.8 million), Philadelphia (5.2 million), San Francisco (4.7 million), and Detroit (4.4 million).

The table also lists the county and city population for the chief city associated with each RMA.[4] The RMA is substantially larger than these other political units. For all 20 places, for example, the total county population is 52% of the total RMA population; cities comprise only 32% of the RMA population. For the six largest RMAs, the figures are as follows:

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[4] The largest metropolitan division customarily used by the U.S. Census--the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA)--is also typically smaller than the RMA; for the 20 largest RMAs, the corresponding SMSA population is 62.7 million, or 80% of the RMA population.

County and City Populations as
Percentage of RMA Population

RMA	County	City
New York	43%	43%
Los Angeles	71%	32%
Chicago	67%	39%
Philadelphia	102%	53%
San Francisco	15%	15%
Detroit	53%	27%

It is obviously of great importance to know whether the person interviewed believed himself or herself to be providing homeless estimates for the entire RMA, the county, or only the city.

Table 2 indicates the number of jurisdictions within each RMA, including states, counties, and cities of over 25,000. The 20 largest RMAs encompass 455 cities in 141 counties, across 32 states. This represents an average of approximately 7 counties and 23 cities per RMA. The six largest RMAs cover 65 counties and 278 cities--an average of 11 and 46, respectively. These figures are intended to illustrate the extremely large size of the RMAs, and thereby suggest the corresponding difficulties associated with estimating their homeless population through a relatively small number of interviews.

The HUD Interviews

HUD conducted telephone interviews with "knowledgeable observers" in the 60 metropolitan areas. Over 500 interviews, averaging one-half hour, were reportedly conducted, including 8-12 calls for each of the 20 largest RMAs. These estimates were then combined into a weighted average for each metropolitan area, with the weights reflecting the reliability of each estimate.[5] Since, as we have seen, the 20 largest RMAs average 23 cities each, with the largest averaging 46, it seems doubtful on the surface that HUD's coverage could have been adequate.

The HUD questionnaire begins with the question, "1. How serious a problem is homelessness in city?"[6] Note that no reference is made to RMA, or even to metropolitan area: the jurisdiction named is intended to be the city (or occasionally the surrounding county). Question 1 makes no attempt to define *city*, an omission which creates several problems. First, it is clear that the interviewee was not responding in terms of the RMA, since the term "RMA" was never mentioned.[7] Second, since question #1 refers to *city* rather than *metropolitan area*, it is doubtful that the interviewee had the latter in mind when responding. The response, therefore, necessarily refers to a much smaller population base than either RMA or metropolitan area--the city itself.

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[5] HUD Report, pp. 4, 13. See Appendix table A-4 for the weights. HUD nowhere indicates how the weights were in fact applied to produce a single estimate.

[6] See the sample questionnaire, exhibit 1.

Table 3 summarizes the number of estimates obtained for the 20 largest RMAs. They are based on my count of the questionnaires obtained under FOIA.[8] While HUD obtained 285 completed questionnaires, only 205 of these--fewer than three-quarters--actually provided point-in-time estimates. This is an average of about 10 per RMA. There is substantial variation in response rate, with Cleveland and Baltimore providing only 4 estimates each at one extreme, and Los Angeles providing 35 at the other. Only 6 RMAs actually provided 10 or more estimates, again raising the question of how HUD could have covered the entire RMA population with so few interviews. To address this question it is helpful to examine several RMAs in some detail.

HUD's RMA coverage: Some Case Studies

New York RMA

As previously noted, the nation's largest RMA covers a metropolitan area of 16.6 million people spread over 3 states (New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut), 24 counties, and 74 cities. In a summary report on the New York City survey, HUD claims to have conducted "about 60 interviews...in both the city and suburbs."[9] In her sworn statement of July 12, 1984, Kathleen Peroff--then-Deputy Director of HUD's Division of Policy Development--stated that "forty interviews were held with persons knowledgeable about specific suburban areas in order to obtain estimates of the extent of homelessness in each of the separate jurisdictions. These estimates were then added to the New York City estimate to arrive at an estimate for the entire metropolitan area."

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[7] In fact, of course, the term "RMA" would not have beeen meaningful to interviewees, and so could not have been used.

[8] These figures differ slightly from those provided to me in summary materials prepared by HUD, which indicated that 206 point-in-time estimates were obtained from 276 completed surveys.

[9] "Reponses to questions 3 and 4 of HUD questionnaire for New York," p. 1.

How, in fact, was the New York RMA estimate derived? The first point to be made is that New York City proper--with its 7.1 million people in five counties[10]--was *not* studied by HUD through its standard survey method. Rather, the city estimate is derived by adding the actual shelter population to a projection of street population. The shelter population is obtained from public records and Partnership for the Homeless data for private shelters. The street population estimate is not based on a hard count, but rather on "data from city outreach programs [which] show that 44% of those contacted refuse to go to shelters".[11] Shelter records indicate that approximately 7,000 singles are found in shelters. Since HUD assumes that there are no families on the streets, it concludes that the 7,000 singles represent 56% of the total single homeless population.

This methodology produces a New York City homeless estimate of 22,611--6,961 singles and 8,150 family members in shelters, 5,500 on the streets, and 2,000 living in abandoned buildings. The accuracy of this estimate rests on two highly questionable assumptions: (1) that the "data from city outreach programs" come from scientific studies which randomly surveyed the entire homeless population throughout the five counties; and (2) that there are in fact no homeless families on the streets.

What about the homeless outside of New York City proper? The "suburban" portion of the New York RMA includes 9.5 million people living in 3 states, 19 counties, and 69 cities. To cover this population HUD conducted thirty-five interviews, of which only *seventeen* provided point-in-time estimates (see table 4). These estimates cover only six of the 19 "suburban" counties, comprising 59% of the suburban population. Thus, even if HUD's homeless estimates for these six counties were accurate, their coverage ignored 13 suburban counties with 41% of the suburban population.

Table 4 reveals another problem with this method, however: the tremendous variability in estimates for the same jurisdiction. For the entire suburban RMA, aggregated estimates vary from 1,850 to 15,050. Westchester county estimates range from 500 to 6,000; Nassau estimates from 50 to 5,000. There is clearly a great deal of guesswork involved in obtaining these numbers. HUD ignored the extreme figures, relying instead on those from those it believed came from "reliable sources." In practice, this meant that the final Essex County homeless estimate was based on at best two sources, the Westchester County estimate on a single source, and the Nassau County estimate on two sources. (The remaining three counties studied by HUD contained negligible numbers of homeless, according to the surveys.)

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[10] The five counties that comprise New York City proper include New York (Manhattan), Kings (Brooklyn), Queens, Bronx, and Richmond (Staten Island).

[11] HUD Worksheet, "Calculation of Homeless Estimate for New York Metropolitan Area." See Exhibit 2.

In sum, the final New York RMA homeless estimate is *not* based on 60 interviews, as HUD claimed, nor even on 40, as Ms. Peroff claimed. Rather, it is based on shelter counts in New York City, a highly questionable extrapolation from those counts to city street population, and fewer than a half dozen "reliable" interviews in three "suburban" counties with significant numbers of homeless people.

Los Angeles RMA

The nation's second largest RMA extends over all or part of five counties--Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura. Its total population is 10.6 million people. There are 88 cities of over 25,000, with heavily urbanized unincorporated portions of Los Angeles and Orange counties as well.

HUD conducted 46 interviews in the Los Angeles RMA, obtaining 35 estimates (table 5).[12] HUD interviewed 25 people in Los Angeles County, 6 in Orange County, and 2 each in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. No interviews were attempted in Ventura County, nor were any attempted for the City of Long Beach (population 361,000). For Los Angeles County, one must question the adequacy of the 25 interviews to cover a county population of 7.5 million spread out over 53 cities as well as urbanized unincorporated areas. Of the 25 interviews, HUD only considered three or four as primary sources for the entire county (United Way, Ocean Park Community Center, Supervisor Dana's Office, and possibly the L.A. Department of Community Services). All of these sources gave county-wide estimates of about 30,000 homeless. Based on marginal notations on the questionnaires, I doubt that any of these sources had conducted a systematic study of the entire county. For example, one primary source--the Department of Community Services--provided a range of 25,000 to 50,000, with the notation that 30,000 is "not a bad estimate."

Furthermore, HUD discarded those estimates which were substantially higher than 30,000. For example, HUD rejected the Los Angeles Legal Aid Service range of 30,000-50,000, substituting instead 25,000 "because of ambiguity." The Redevelopment Agency's estimate of 30,000-50,000 was rejected by HUD as "speculative." The *Los Angeles Times* estimate of 15,000-20,000 is accompanied by a marginal notation, "25,000 L.A. County," suggesting that the lower figure used by HUD is not in fact a county-wide estimate.

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[12] 44 different interviews were actually completed, providing 33 different estimates--since two sources provided estimates for both L.A. County and skid row in the City of Los Angeles.

Similar difficulties arise with the Orange County figures. Of the six estimates, only three are cited by HUD as reliable--a councilwoman from Irvine, "Share Ourselves," and the Orange County Homeless Coalition. These groups provide estimates of 4,000-6,000. The YWCA, on the other hand, estimates 4,000 *women* in the county--which would result in a substantially higher *total* figure (HUD fails to calculate this figure.)

In sum, despite the seemingly large numbers of interviews conducted in the Los Angeles RMA, the final estimates are largely based on 6-8 primary sources. These sources are all county-wide estimates, and not aggregations of separate estimates obtained for the 88 cities contained within the RMA. Additionally, as with New York, there is tremendous variability among these estimates. For the entire RMA, for example, combined estimates range from a low of 15,100 to a high of 62,500 (table 5). It is hard to imagine how any firm conclusions can be drawn from these data.

Chicago RMA

The nation's third largest RMA has a population of 7.8 million in three states (Illinois, Indiana, and WEisconsin), 10 counties, and some 46 cities. It extends from Kenosha, Wisconsin to Gary, Indiana, and as far west as Elgin, Aurora, and Joliet. HUD attempted to cover this metropolitan area with 15 interviews, of which 9 eventually provided estimates (table 6). For the City of Chicago itself, there are five estimates, four of which stem from a single study; the fifth is regarded as "very soft."[13] The five estimates vary from 12,000 to 28,000. None of the Chicago estimates is a primary source. HUD also obtained two estimates for suburban Cook County, one ranging from 700 to 1,200, the other for 2,000; the lower estimate bears the notation, "off the top of my head." HUD sought to get estimates in McHenry, DuPage, and Kane Counties, but was refused. One estimate was obtained for Joliet (Will County), and one for Lake County (Illinois). Surprisingly, *no* estimates were obtained for the Indiana portion of the RMA--which includes such cities as Hammond, Gary, Portage, East Chicago, Highland, and Merrilville--nor for the Wisconsin portion.

In sum, it would appear that the homeless estimates for the Chicago RMA are based almost entirely on the City of Chicago, which contains only 39% of the total RMA population. Furthermore, these city estimates are not independently derived, but rather are largely based in the same study. The city estimates are augmented by two for suburban Cook County, one for Lake County, and one for the City of Joliet. These sources cannot be regarded as providing reliable primary coverage for the entire RMA.

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[13] The study referred to is the Task Force on Emergency Shelter, Social Services Task Force of the Department of Human Services, "Homelessness in Chicago," October 1983.

Philadelphia RMA

The nation's fourth largest RMA comprises 5.2 million people in 4 states (Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, and Maryland), 12 counties, and 16 cities. It extends from Trenton and Camden on the northeast to Wilmington and Newark on the southwest. HUD completed 17 interviews, obtaining 14 estimates (table 7). Half of these estimates were for the City of Philadelphia, which contains about one-third of the RMA population. City estimates ranged as low as 400 and as high as 8,100. Three additional estimates were obtained for the cities of Media and Chester in Delaware County; two for Montgomery County; and two for Camden County. No estimates were obtained for the remaining eight counties, which include the cities of Trenton (New Jersey) and Wilmington (Delaware).

HUD reports a range of 450-8,050 for the Philadelphia RMA (HUD Report, table 2). Interestingly, this is exactly the range that is found for the City of Philadelphia, if one uses the midpoint of the lowest estimate (400-500) and the highest (8,000-8,100). In other words, HUD failed to add its estimates for the other three counties to those of the City of Philadelphia, in deriving its final estimate. HUD's "reliable range," 2,200-5,000, also pertains to the City itself. HUD appears to have completely identified the city with the RMA in this instance.

Pittsburgh RMA

The Pittsburgh RMA has a population of 2.2 million people in 6 counties and 8 cities, strung out along the valleys formed by the Ohio and Allegheny Rivers and their tributaries. HUD conducted 13 interviews for the RMA, obtaining 11 estimates. 9 of these estimates apparently refer to the City of Pittsburgh alone. These estimates vary considerably: from "25-50" to 3,000.[14] The most commonly cited city estimate is 1,500, based on a recent study.[15] Additionally, two estimates were obtained that apparently refer to Allegheny County--one for 2,200, the other for 3,000. No attempt was made to gather data for the other five counties that also comprise the Pittsburgh RMA. (The City of Pittsburgh contains 20% of the RMA population; Allegheny County contains two-thirds.)

HUD's final estimate for Pittsburgh bears little relationship to even these figures (HUD Report, table 2). HUD claims the estimates vary from 50 to 1,500; in fact, as we have seen, they vary from 25 to 3,000. HUD publishes a "reliable range" of 600-1,175; yet the most common "hard" estimate for the city alone is 1,500, and for the county is 3,000--and these figures ignore the remainder of the RMA.

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[14] There are two other "low" estimates (45-50 and 300-400) and one other "high" estimate (2,200). The others range between 1,000 and 1,500.

[15] Kenneth Winograd, The Emergency Shelter Task Force, "Street People and Other Homeless--a Pittsburgh Study," August 1982.

Boston

The Boston RMA numbers 3.7 million people, living in 41 cities, 5 counties, and 2 states (Massachusetts and New Hampshire). The RMA extends from the New Hampshire suburbs on the north to Plymouth on the south, and as far west as Framingham and Marlborough. Yet HUD conducted only 8 interviews, and 2 come from the same organization (the Massachusetts Coalition on the Homeless). According to HUD, five of the estimates reference the same source, which produced a "hard count" of 2,767 homeless persons in the City of Boston.[16] The estimates range from 2,000-5,000, the higher figure being provided by only three sources--one of which mentions "greater Boston."

HUD, in other words, apparently based its estimate for the Boston RMA largely on a single study of the City of Boston. HUD's "most reliable range" for Boston (3,100-3,300) is only slightly higher (300-500 people) than the "hard" estimate for the city. This methodology largely ignores the homeless outside of Boston, by assuming that 90% of the homeless are found in the city itself. Yet the City of Boston contains only 15% of the total RMA population.[17]

Conclusions

These examples reveal the principal deficiencies with HUD's RMA-based methodology. These include:

- The "softness" of the data, revealed by the enormous variability in estimates for the same jurisdiction. There are very few "hard counts," and in the absence of such data even the most seemingly authoritative estimates are largely guesswork.
- The failure to adequately cover all jurisdictions within the RMA. Rather than contact each municipality, HUD generally focused on the central city (or occasionally a few major cities), and then relied on county-wide data for the remaining estimates. It is extremely

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[16] City of Boston Emergency Shelter Commission, "The October Project: Seeing the Obvious Problem," October 1983. The study found 925 persons in shelters, 652 in detoxification and mental health centers, and 1190 counted in the streets.

[17] It should also be mentioned that the Emergency Shelter Commission now regards their earlier figure as a "gross underestimate," and reports 5,000-10,000 as more accurate. HUD discounts this latter claim in its summary sheet for Boston.

doubtful that such estimates are accurate, since the larger counties are highly dispersed, with numerous population centers and uncoordinated record-keeping among jurisdictions. In some instances, HUD gathered data for the central city alone, making no effort to reach the remainder of the RMA.

- The repeated confusion of *RMA* with *city*. While HUD claimed to be gathering data for the former, the questionnaires suggest that the vast majority of respondents reported in terms of the latter. Since cities constitute only a small fraction of RMA population (one-third, for the 20 largest RMAs), this confusion results in a gross underestimate of the total homeless population.

Other Problems

Sloppiness in Estimation Procedures

The worksheet used to compute the homeless ratios for the 20 largest RMAs, provided under FOIA, reveal considerable carelessness on the part of the HUD researchers.[18] For example, the figures for the New York RMA are incorrect. HUD uses 26,472 for *both* its low and high estimates; in fact, based on its own published figures, it should have used 28,000-30,000. Additionally, the low and high figures for five RMAs (Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Portland, San Francisco, and Washington) are reversed in the worksheet, resulting in errors in the final calculations. While these errors do not change HUD's final results appreciably, they are in my view symptomatic of the carelessness which characterizes the study throughout.

That carelessness is also seen in the questionnaires. While responses in some RMAs are recorded in meticulous detail, in most instances only brief (often illegible) notations are used. Question #4--"How did you arrive at that figure"--is frequently left blank.

The Westat Study

The Westat survey of shelter operators, which provided HUD with its third estimate, is not reliable. The HUD Report itself does not summarize the Westat results by RMA--it simply indicates the total number of homeless estimated by Westat (353,000), providing HUD with its upper "reliable" bound. But HUD (under FOIA) released a summary computer printout of the Westat RMA results which is extremely revealing.[19]

Table 8 summarizes these results. Since HUD has not indicated how the separate estimates for each RMA are combined into a single figure (are they added? averaged?), I have simply reported the range of estimates. Table 8 leads to several conclusions.

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[18] See exhibit 3.

[19] See exhibit 4.

First, the reponse rate is *extremely* low. In all, 64 responses were obtained for the 20 RMAs--an average of only three for each RMA. Apart from New York, which had 11 responses, no RMA had more than 5. Six RMAs had only two responses each, including Chicago, Boston, Baltimore, Cleveland, Detroit, and Kansas City. Three RMAs produced only a single response each--Pittsburgh, Miami, and Hartford. The Los Angeles estimate is based on only three estimates. There is simply no way that *any* useful RMA totals could be obtained with so few responses. It is inconceivable that a single shelter operator in Miami, for example, could provide an accurate figure for the entire Miami RMA, with its 2.7 million people in 24 cities. Or that two shelter operators could do the same for Chicago, the second largest metropolitan area in the United States.

Second, there is enormous variability among even the few estimates that were obtained for each RMA. The two Baltimore estimates are 10,500 and 20,000. The two Chicago estimates are 2,000 and 20,000. The three Los Angeles estimates are 25,000, 26,000, and 40,000. The list could be extended, but the point is that Westat could not possibly have combined such diverse estimates into a single reliable figure for each RMA.

Finally, the Westat figures for each RMA differ greatly from HUD's other estimates. For example, HUD's "reliable" range for Baltimore is 630-750 (HUD Report, table 2); yet the Westat survey indicates 10,500-20,000. Significant discrepancies are also found for Cincinnati, Detroit, Hartford, Miami, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Portland, San Francisco, and Seattle.

In light of these significant shortcomings, it is not surprising that HUD chose not to publish the Westat results for each RMA, but simply to present the aggregate figure.

TABLE 1

CITY AND COUNTY POPULATION AS PERCENT OF RMA POPULATION

CITY (RMA)	RMA POP	COUNTY: POPULATION	COUNTY: PCT RMA	CITY: POPULATION	CITY: PCT RMA
Baltimore	1,883,100	655,615	34.8%	786,775	41.8%
Boston	3,738,800	650,142	17.4%	562,994	15.1%
Chicago	7,803,800	5,253,655	67.3%	3,005,072	38.5%
Cincinnati	1,476,600	873,224	59.1%	385,457	26.1%
Cleveland	2,218,300	1,498,400	67.5%	573,822	25.9%
Detroit	4,399,000	2,337,891	53.1%	1,203,339	27.4%
Hartford	1,055,700	601,079	56.9%	136,392	12.9%
Houston	2,689,200	2,409,547	89.6%	1,595,138	59.3%
Kansas City, MO	1,254,600	629,266	50.2%	448,159	35.7%
Los Angeles/Riverside	10,555,500	7,477,503	70.8%	3,328,184	31.5%
Miami	2,689,100	1,625,781	60.5%	346,865	12.9%
Minn./St. Paul	1,978,000	1,401,195	70.8%	641,181	32.4%
New York	16,573,600	7,071,639	42.7%	7,071,639	42.7%
Philadelphia	5,153,900	1,688,210	32.8%	1,688,210	32.8%
Phoenix	1,483,500	1,509,262	101.7%	789,704	53.2%
Pittsburgh	2,155,100	1,450,085	67.3%	423,938	19.7%
Portland	1,220,100	562,640	46.1%	366,383	30.0%
San Francisco	4,665,500	678,974	14.6%	678,974	14.6%
Seattle	2,077,100	1,269,749	61.1%	493,846	23.8%
Washington	3,220,700	638,432	19.8%	638,432	19.8%
TOTALS:	78,291,200	40,282,289	51.5%	25,164,504	32.1%

TABLE 2

NUMBER OF JURISDICTIONS IN EACH RMA

RMA	STATES	COUNTIES	CITIES > 25000
Baltimore	1	4	11
Boston	2	5	41
Chicago	2	10	46
Cincinnati	2	8	5
Cleveland	1	8	17
Detroit	1	5	23
Hartford	1	4	10
Houston	1	2	4
Kansas City, MO	2	6	10
Los Angeles/Riverside	1	5	88
Miami	1	3	24
Minn./St. Paul	1	6	10
New York	3	24	74
Philadelphia	4	12	16
Phoenix	1	1	7
Pittsburgh	1	6	8
Portland	2	7	5
San Francisco	1	9	31
Seattle	1	6	11
Washington	3	10	14
TOTALS:	32	141	455

TABLE 3

INTERVIEWS AND POINT-IN-TIME ESTIMATES, BY RANALLY METROPOLITAN AREA

RMA	NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS	ESTIMATES OBTAINED
Baltimore	9	4
Boston	8	8
Chicago	13	9
Cincinnati	10	9
Cleveland	14	4
Detroit	9	9
Hartford	6	6
Houston	8	6
Kansas City, MO	9	6
Los Angeles/Riverside	46	35
Miami	10	9
Minneapolis/St. Paul	7	7
New York	35	17
Philadelphia	17	14
Phoenix	10	10
Pittsburgh	13	11
Portland	7	7
San Francisco	36	23
Seattle	9	8
Washington	9	5
TOTALS:	285	207

SOURCE: HUD FOIA summary data and actual survey count

TABLE 4

SUMMARY OF NEW YORK (SUBURBAN) RMA INTERVIEWS

COUNTY	SURVEYS	ESTIMATES	LOW	HIGH
Essex (New Jersey)	9	3	1,000	3,500
Westchester (New York)	6	3	500	6,000
Nassau (New York)	10	4	50	5,000
Suffolk (New York)	3	3	100	300
Passaic (New Jersey)	4	2	100	150
Bergen (New Jersey)	3	2	100	100
TOTALS:	35	17	1,850	15,050

Estimates were not obtained in the following counties:

In New York State: Putnam, Rockland, and Orange.
In Connecticut: Fairfield
In New Jersey: Morris, Essex, Union, Middlesex, Monmouth, Somerset, Hunterdon, Warren, or Mercer.

TABLE 5

SUMMARY OF LOS ANGELES RMA INTERVIEWS

COUNTY	SURVEYS	ESTIMATES	LOW	HIGH
Los Angeles	29	25	12,000	50,000
Orange	7	6	2,000	10,000
Riverside	6	2	600	1,500
San Bernardino	4	2	500	1,000
Ventura	0	0	N/A	N/A
TOTALS:	46	35	15,100	62,500

NOTE:

The Los Angeles County estimate includes 16 for the county as a whole, 5 for skid row, and 1 each for Los Angeles City, Santa Monica, Pasadena, and Van Nuys (Long Beach declined). It is interesting to note that the City estimate--provided by the Deputy Mayor's office--is 30,000, which is equal to the average figure for the entire county.

TABLE 6

SUMMARY OF CHICAGO RMA INTERVIEWS

CITY/COUNTY	SURVEYS	ESTIMATES	LOW	HIGH
City of Chicago	6	5	12,000	28,000
Suburban Cook County	2	2	700	2,000
City of Joliet (Will Coun	1	1	12	12
Lake County	1	1	100	100
McHenry County	1	0		
DuPage County	1	0		
Kane County	1	0		
TOTALS:	13	9	12,812	30,112

NOTE: No estimates were sought from the Indiana portion of the RMA.

TABLE 7

SUMMARY OF PHILADELPHIA RMA INTERVIEWS

COUNTY	SURVEYS	ESTIMATES	LOW	HIGH
City of Philadelphia	10	7	400	8,100
Delaware County	3	3	420	725
Montgomery County	2	2	50	150
Camden County	2	2	100	435
TOTALS:	17	14	970	9,410

TABLE 8

WESTAT ESTIMATES COMPARED WITH HUD SURVEY ESTIMATES

RMA	NO. INTS.	NO. ESTS.	WESTAT RANGE		"RELIABLE" RANGE	
			LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
Baltimore	3	2	10,500	20,000	630	750
Boston	4	2	3,000	5,000	3,100	3,300
Chicago	6	2	2,000	30,000	19,400	20,300
Cincinnati	3	3	1,000	5,000	800	950
Cleveland	2	2	500	600	400	420
Detroit	2	2	300	4,500	7,200	7,800
Hartford	2	1	250	250	600	1,800
Houston	6	4	200	9,000	5,200	7,500
Kansas City	4	2	40	500	340	400
L. A./Riverside	7	3	25,000	40,000	31,300	33,800
Miami	1	1	1,500	1,500	5,100	6,800
Minn./St. Paul	4	3	599	2,000	870	1,150
New York	15	11	998	40,000	28,000	30,000
Philadelphia	5	5	100	10,000	2,200	5,000
Phoenix	4	4	2,000	3,000	750	1,400
Pittsburgh	1	1	1,500	1,500	600	1,175
Portland	5	3	2,500	20,000	1,400	1,700
San Francisco	4	4	1,000	2,000	7,700	8,800
Seattle	6	4	1,500	10,000	3,100	3,250
Washington	7	5	2,000	10,000	3,000	6,400

SOURCE: Westat computer summary, and HUD Report, table 2.

EXHIBIT 1

PERCEPTIONS OF PROBLEM

Date ______________

Title/Organization Co. Social Services, NJ Bergen Co.

Phone 201-368-4202

Address ____________________________

1a. How serious a problem is Homelessness in city? (If answer doesn't obviously fall into one of categories probe, write down colorful comments).

☐ Very serious

☐ Serious

☒ Not serious, not a real problem

Shortage of hsng!! less than few coming here 2%

1b. Is there a great need for additional shelters for the homeless in this area?

2. Has there been any public concern about the issue (probes articles and editorials in local newspaper? Task Force set up? Know of any study of problem by public agency or other local organization? Probe For Records and Reports)

- FEMA — 71,599
temp shelter!
$22 a day – 20 a day
20 single adults
(in motels)
10 Families!
82 clients – tried to get in!
Jan 4th + Feb 15th
14 "adult protective service" in need
3 protective service!!
20 troublemakers!
60 in need!
20 — flop house!

Low income
housing; great
need shelter;
lack of services
funds for
deinstitutionalized
lot of linkup.
walking on
in psychiatric
wards!
no place
to

3. How many people would you estimate were homeless on an average night last week - Including both those in the shelters and on the streets? -- Does this include people who are doubling up or staying with friends. How many would that be?

emergency
assistance

☐ Refused to estimate

☐ Very hesitant to make estimate

☑ Estimate given without hesitation

Estimated number less than 100

50 hard core
cunning!

☐☐☐.☐☐☐

half

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

4. (Only for those who are not hesitant) How do you arrive at that figure? ____________

____

5. How do these numbers compare to the same time last year (Try to get percent change), what year did numbers start to rise?

~~Don't know!~~
yes.

6a. Many studies classify the homeless into three main groups:

- skid row alcoholics 20 [illegible] % 2
- people with mental health problems 14% 3
- the new homeless, that is, people who have lost their job within the last two years. What proportion of the homeless in (city) fall into each of these categories? (probe - Are there any other sizeable groups of the homeless.)

6b. How have these proportions changed over the last few years. If you can't obtain exact %'s, ask for ranking.

	%	Changes?
Skid row alcoholics	☐ ☐	
People with mental health problems	☐ ☐	
New Homeless	☐ ☐	
Other (specify)	☐ ☐	

7. What proportion of the new homeless are parents with children?
[illegible] — not many kept them off!! extremely!

8. What proportion are transients (from out of town).
Most of them are local! [illegible] only of town!

9. Any other comments on situation? Who else talk to?

EXHIBIT 2

Chris NYC file K

Calculation of Homeless Estimate for New York Metropolitan Area

A.	**New York City** (as of 12/31/83)	
1.	Single men and women in shelters as of 12/31/83 (New York City shelter records)	5,846
2.	Families (New York City records - Number of families multiplied by 3.6 to give person count)	8,150
3.	Shelter Users in private shelters (Partnership for the Homeless)	1,115
4.	Street Population Estimate - Data from city outreach programs for the homeless show that 44% of of those contacted refuse to go to shelters. Thus, it was assumed that the single shelter population (5,846 + 1,115) equal 56 percent of the single homeless population (total in shelters and "on streets"). That figure is approximately 12,400; the difference between it and 6,961 (shelter population) produces a rough estimate of street population (5,500). Based on interviews with city officials and others, it is unlikely that there are any families with children on the streets.	5,500 (rounded)
	An additional estimate of the population living in abandoned buildings was received from a city official.	2,000
	Total "Street" and "Shelter" Population	22,611
B.	**Suburban Homeless Population** Sum of estimates from all jurisdictions contacted outside of New York City that are within the New York Ranally Metropolitan Area.	5,800-7,800
C.	**Total for New York Metropolitan Area**	28,000-30,000

Sanley
3/11/84

EXHIBIT 3

Large
An Alternative to Estimating Homeless

Homeless Ratio for city i, i=1,60 × Wt for i, i=1,60 Summed = Wted Ratio for 60 cities

	SMA Pop.	X (wt.)	Max Count PSA	Min count R	(PSA / POP)	(PSA / POP · X)
Baltimore	1,883,100	1.68	750	630	.00040	.00067
Boston	3,738,800	1.19	3300	3077	.00088	.00105
Chicago	7,803,800	1.00	20311	19424	.00260	.00260
Cincinnati	1,476,600	1.90	950	812	.00064	.00122
Cleveland	2,218,300	1.55	400	420	.00018	.00028
Detroit	4,399,000	1.00	7800	7208	.00177	.00177
Hartford	1,055,700	2.24	1851	615	.00175	.00392
Houston	2,689,200	1.41	7500	5200	.00279	.00393
Kansas City	1,254,600	2.06	400	343	.00032	.00066
LA	9,840,200	1.00	33833	31307	.00344	.00344
Miami	2,689,100	1.41	6800	5087	.00253	.00357
Minneapolis	1,978,000	1.64	1150	869	.00058	.00095
New York	16,573,600	1.00	26472	26472	.00160	.00160
Philadelphia	5,153,900	1.00	2172 ⟷	5017	.00042	.00042
Phoenix	1,4[illegible],500	1.89	1400	750	.00094	.00178
Pittsburgh	2,155,100	[illegible]	600 ←	1175	.00028	.00047
Portland	1,220,100	2.09	1400 ⟷	1700	.00115	.00240
S.F	4,665,500	1.00	7720 ⟷	5763	.00165	.00[illegible]5
Seattle	2,077,100	1.60	3250	3125	.00156	.00399
Wash DC	3,220,700	1.28	3000 ⟷	6400	.00093	.00119
	77,575,900					

$$\text{Wtd Average Ratio for Large Cities} = \frac{\Sigma(\text{PSA}/\text{Pop} \cdot X)}{\Sigma X} = \frac{.03753}{29.51} = .0013$$

EXHIBIT 4

New York	13000.
	20000.
	998.
	40000.
	999998.
	6000.
	36000.
	40000.
	10000.
	999998.
	30000.
	999998.
	999998.
	20000.
	6000.
Philadelphia	2700.
	2700.
	2700.
	10000.
	100.
Boston	3000.
	999998.
	5000.
	999998.
Pittsburgh	1500.
Hartford	999998.
	250.
Washington	999998.
	2000.
	2500.
	4500.
	3000.
	999998.
	20000.
Houston	999998.
	999998.
	2000.
	9000.
	300.
	200.
Miami	1500.
Baltimore	20000.
	10500.
	999998.
Chicago	999999.
	2000.
	999998.
	20000.
	999998.
	999999.
Detroit	4500.
	300.
Cleveland	500.
	600.
Minneapolis	999998.
	599.
	2000.
	1300.
Cincinnati	1800.
	1000.
	5000.
Kansas City	999998.
	500.
	999998.
	40.
Los Angeles	26000.
	999998.
	999998.
	25000.
	40000.
	999998.

	99998.
San Francisco	1200.
	1000.
	75.
	2000.
Seattle	2000.
	3000.
	10000.
	1300.
	99998.
	99998.
Phoenix	950.
	950.
	2000.
	3000.
Portland	99998.
	99998.
	20000.
	4500.
	2500.

Note: 999998/99998 indicates no response.

(4) Estimates of homeless for 20 metropolitan areas from Westat survey of shelter operators.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. Thank you very much, Dr. Applebaum. Dr. Ericksen.

STATEMENT OF EUGENE ERICKSEN, PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY, TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

Mr. **Ericksen**. My name is Eugene Ericksen. I am from Temple University. I also have 20 years experience as a sampling statistician at the Institute for Survey Research at Temple and Mathematical Policy Research in Princeton, NJ, and currently for National Economic Research Associates in their Philadelphia office.

I would like to point out that I have written testimony which has been submitted for the record, and my objective here is simply to hit some of the highlights of that testimony.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. By unanimous consent we are going to ask that your prepared text be submitted for the record, and also I ask unanimous consent that following in the record, I be permitted to place into the proceedings a letter from me and the subcommittee to Dr. June O. Koch, Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Dr. Koch's reply for the record.

[The letter of Mr. Gonzalez to June Koch dated November 5, 1985, and the reply letter from June Koch to Mr. Gonzalez dated November 27, 1985, follows:]

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STAFF DIRECTOR

(202) 225-7054

November 5, 1985

Dr. June Q. Koch
Assistant Secretary for
  Policy Development and Research
U.S.Department of Housing and
  Urban Development
Washington, D. C. 20410

Dear Dr. Koch:

On May 24, 1984, this Subcommittee in conjunction with the Subcommittee on Employment and Housing of the Government Operations Committee conducted a hearing on a Report to the Secretary on the Homeless and Emergency Shelters.

Serious questions were raised during the course of this hearing on the conclusion of The Report to the Secretary and on the methodology and surveying techniques that were employed in developing this report. Subsequent to the hearing, the Department made available to the Subcommittee additional materials and documents that were used in developing the report. On March 13, 1985, when Secretary Pierce testified before the Subcommittee, he restated his earlier position of confidence in both the conclusions and methodology of the report. We have been reviewing the documents and information that the Department has subsequently supplied the Subcommittee and wish to request from your office additional information that pertains to our misgivings about the May 1984 report to the Secretary.

We do not wish to engage in an attempt to develop a new study to obtain an accurate count of homelessness. We believe there is no possible way to get an accurate count of the homeless people. However, we continue to be troubled with the implications of the Secretary's report of last year which trivializes the extent of homelessness and need further information to clarify outstanding ambiguities. I would like to request from the Department the following pertinent information:

(1) A copy of a RFP (if one was issued) pertaining to an advertisement of the proposed study. Any correspondence between the Department and Westat discussing the purpose of the proposed project and

Dr. June Q. Koch

Westat's proposal (if any) and any other less formal communications between the Department and Westat that was issued.

(2) In submitting the additional information that the Subcommittee requested with regard to the worksheets, we noted the assignment of weights to the responses to the HUD survey. We understand surveying techniques employ weights to establish a common denominator with regard to the different communities that are being surveyed. None of the documents submitted to the Subcommittee describe or indicate how the weights were developed or how the weights were assigned to particular estimates. Please submit any information that the Department has that relates to the development of the weights employed in the survey.

(3) A major issue that arose during the course of the May 1984 hearing was the question of the use of Rand McNally Areas (RMAs) in place of the usual governmental demarkation of Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs). Please supply the Subcommittee any documentation and reasons why RMAs, rather than other statistical measures, were employed.

(4) Please provide a breakdown of the 1980 census figures used to produce estimates of the homeless not using shelters.

We would appreciate your prompt attention to this request. The Subcommittee intends to review these unresolved issues as part of an oversight hearing on November 19th on the nature and scope of homelessness.

Sincerely,

Henry Gonzalez

Henry B. Gonzalez
Chairman

Bruce F. Vento

Bruce F. Vento

Barney Frank

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20410

ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH

November 27, 1985

Honorable Henry B. Gonzalez
Chairman, Subcommittee on Housing
and Community Development
Committee on Banking, Finance, and
Urban Affairs
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Gonzalez:

This is in response to your letter of November 5, 1985, requesting additional information on "A Report to the Secretary on the Homeless and Emergency Shelters."

Your first request was for a copy of the RFP that served as the basis for Westat's survey of shelter providers. That survey was done under an Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC) with Westat that was competitively awarded in November 1982. Similar to other IQCs maintained by the Office of Policy Development and Research, this contract is in force for a three-year period during which rapid turnaround survey research is conducted under Task Orders as opposed to an RFP. Each Task Order consists of a statement of work, and I am enclosing the statement used for the survey of shelter operators. The Department issued no other formal communications to Westat discussing the purpose or any other aspect of the survey, and relied upon consultations between HUD professional research staff and Westat's professional staff following issuance of the Task Order.

Your second request was for further information on the weighting procedures used in the study. As you indicated, we have submitted to the Subcommittee the complete file of worksheets used by the research staff in developing the estimates of homeless persons. As is clear in the HUD report, three different weights were used in the research: the first relates to the selection of a sample of metropolitan areas from the universe of all metropolitan areas; the second relates to the selection of a sample of shelters from the universe of all shelters in the sampled metropolitan areas; and the third relates to an assessment of the reliability of estimates received during interviews with local officials, representatives of local task forces on the homeless, advocacy groups for the homeless, social services agencies, local housing authorities, and others. The first two weights were combined to estimate the number of homeless, based on interviews with shelter operators. Each metropolitan estimate was multiplied by its sampling weight (which was a function of the shelter's probability of being selected in the sample) and the products were then summed to arrive at an estimate for metropolitan areas. This was then added to an estimate for non-metropolitan areas to arrive at a national estimate. The first weight, in conjunction with the third weight, was used to estimate the number of homeless, based on interviews with local experts and observers. These weighting procedures are described in Appendix A of the HUD report, a copy of which is enclosed.

Your third request was for information on the reasons why RMAs were used in the study. The decision to employ Rand McNally Areas (or Ranally Metro Areas, RMAs) for sampling purposes was made by members of the study team and was based on strictly technical, research grounds. As you may know, RMAs were developed by Rand McNally in 1970 to be used as a measure of urban and suburban development in the United States. They are used by private organizations as well as government agencies when a standard measure of the populated portions of urban and suburban areas is needed. Information that existed at the time the study was being done indicated that homeless persons tended to be concentrated (although not exclusively located) in the most populated parts of urban places, and it was the study team's judgment that the RMA was a more appropriate sample frame than the SMSA for this reason. Unlike the SMSA, which--except for New England--is based on whole counties, the RMA is based on townships or localities. This means that relatively unpopulated outlying areas of a county that otherwise would be within an SMSA's metropolitan area would not be included in an RMA. Despite the fact that in many areas the RMA represents considerably less land area than an SMSA, RMAs represent a large share of the Nation's urban and suburban population: in 1980, the 300 RMAs that approximated the 284 SMSAs comprised about 92 percent of the SMSA population, and all RMAs combined represented 72 percent of the Nation's population. Therefore, the total RMA population is a good approximation of the Nation's urban and suburban population.

The fact that RMAs represented the populated parts of metropolitan areas, and that available information indicated that the homeless concentrated in such places, was provided to the Subcommittee by Mr. David Marker, a statistician at Westat, during the May 1984 hearings. In addition, following the hearings, the Department submitted to the Subcommittee a statement indicating that, from a research perspective, it does not matter which definition (RMA, SMSA, county, State, etc.) is employed so long as the population base and the estimates of the homeless refer to the same areas. In larger metropolitan areas (such as New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, and San Francisco--which are the largest RMAs) estimates were obtained separately for the central city and surrounding area, and then combined to form a metropolitan-wide estimate using the appropriate population base; in other areas, interviewers asked respondents for the number of homeless in the metropolitan area. Some respondents could not provide this information, but many did provide it and that information was used to derive local and, from those, national estimates.

Finally, your fourth request was for a breakdown of the 1980 census figures used in the report. In conjunction with the decennial census of population, the Bureau of the Census conducts a "casual count" of homeless and transient persons at such places as employment offices, bus and train stations, welfare offices, food stamp centers, pool halls, and street corners. As is stated in the report, the number of persons enumerated during the "casual count" cannot be considered a national census of the homeless since the enumeration is done only in some census districts. The figures used in the HUD report come from a special tabulation, and are not broken down. The total number of people enumerated during the 1980 "casual count" was 23,237, and the districts in which such counts were conducted contained 12 percent of the population of the United States. The procedure used to arrive at a national estimate of the homeless based on these numbers is described in the report.

I am also sending this information to Representative Vento and Representative Frank.

Sincerely,

June Q. Koch, Ph.D.

Enclosures

APPENDIX A

SAMPLING AND ESTIMATION PROCEDURES

The first part of this Appendix provides more information on the procedures used to draw a national sample of 60 metropolitan areas (Approach 2 in Chapter 2) and to select a sample of shelters from these areas for the national shelter survey (Approach 3). The second part describes the procedure used to arrive at a single estimate of the number of homeless persons in each of the areas (Approach 2).

Sampling and Weighting Procedures

Sampling was done in two stages: the first involved selecting a sample of metropolitan areas to represent all metropolitan areas of the United States; the second involved selecting a sample of shelters to represent the universe of all shelters located in metropolitan areas.

The national sample of 60 metropolitan areas (also referred to as cities) was selected from a list of metropolitan areas containing more than 50,000 people. This list of 394 areas, published by Rand McNally, is based on 1980 Census data. The 394 areas were placed into three strata: metropolitan areas of over 1,000,000 people; those between 1,000,000 and 250,000; and those between 250,000 and 50,000. Samples of 20 cities were selected from each stratum with probability proportional to the square root of their population. Any metropolitan area containing more than 4,000,000 people was selected with certainty. This sampling procedure was developed to ensure the inclusion of large cities where the homeless tend to live, while also representing smaller and mid-sized cities. Each stratum was ordered by geographic region to ensure the appropriate distribution of sampled cities throughout the country (see Table A-1).

The shelter sample was drawn from a list of all shelters in the 60 cities. A complete list of shelters for each city was obtained from such

TABLE A-1

Number of Sampled Cities by Size and Region

City Size Strata	Region				Total
	East	South	North Central	West	
Small	4	7	5	4	20
Medium	4	9	4	3	20
Large	5(2) a/	4	6(2)	5(2)	20
TOTAL	13	20	15	12	60

a/ Numbers in parentheses represent cities selected with certainty.

sources as the Salvation Army, Travelers Aid, the Coalition for the Homeless, local task forces, social service agencies, and local officials. These city shelter lists, with data on the population served and capacity of each shelter, were compiled by HUD staff.

Cross-checking of the lists with directors of individual shelters, as part of the pretest for the study, indicated that they were comprehensive. Shelters for runaways or juvenile delinquents were excluded from the sampling frame. The combined shelter list was ordered to preserve the distribution of shelters by type of clientele and geographic region.

The 60 sampled cities contained 679 shelters out of an estimated 1,811 shelters for the entire nation. The estimate is based on the sampling frame for the 60 cities (see Table A-2).

TABLE A-2

Available Number of Shelters for Selection Process

	Number of Sampled Cities	Number of Shelters in Sampled Cities	Estimated Number of Shelters
Small cities	20	48	736
Medium cities	20	115	409
Certainty cities	6	252	252
Other large cities	14	264	414
TOTAL	60	679	1,811

A sample of approximately 200 shelters was desired. Thirty-eight of the 679 shelters had estimated capacities of over 200 persons, or weighted shelter capacities of over 300 persons per night. Each of these was selected at the second sampling stage with certainty. Their final weights were equal to their city's weight. Fifteen of these were in cities that were selected into the sample with certainty; the other 23 were from cities with weights of 1.2 to 4.8.

The remainder, approximately 170 shelters, were selected from the remaining 1,773 (1,811 - 38) shelters, with an overall constant rate of approximately 1:10.5. Most of the small cities in the sample have city weights $\geq$ 11, so the closest it was possible to produce equal weights was by sampling all of the 48 shelters that are located in small cities. Their final weights are, therefore, equal to their city weights (9.4 to 20.5). Finally, an additional 120 shelters were selected from the remaining 1,037 shelters in the universe (1,773 - 736), at a rate that was inversely proportional to their city weight, for an overall sampling weight of 1:8.6. Table A-3 summarizes the final sampling weights attached to each of the 206 sampled shelters. 1/

TABLE A-3
Shelter Weights

Shelters in Sample	Final Weight
15	1.0
23	1.2 to 4.8
48	9.4 to 20.0
120	8.6

Producing a Single Estimate of the Homeless for Each Metropolitan Area

As noted in Chapter 2, a number of estimates of the homeless population were obtained from different local observers for each of the 60 cities in the sample. In order to produce a single city estimate, each of these locally derived estimates was weighted according to the respondent's knowledge and sources of information about the homeless situation in his or her community. The weights were based on the answer to a follow-up probe, asking those who gave estimates how they arrived at their figure(s). The weighting scheme is presented in Table A-4. Weighted estimates for each city were, then, averaged to produce a single figure.

TABLE A-4
Weights Assigned to Source of Estimate

Source of Estimate	Weight
Street count throughout city	4
Street count in part of city	2
Records from all shelters	4
Records from single shelter	2
Statistics from social agencies	4
On Task Force, or conducted study	4
Knew of Task Force or other study	2
Statistics from soup kitchens/feeding program	2
Police records and observations	2
Unsystematic observation	1
Unspecified/local media/anecdotal/guess	0
Respondent's general familiarity with local homeless situation	+1 or -1

1/ The sampling plan for selecting the shelters and the telephone interviews with shelter operators were conducted by Westat, Inc., a national survey research firm located in Rockville, Maryland.

TASK ORDER FOR STUDY OF HOMELESS

Scope of Work

Background Statement

The Policy Studies Division is planning a study of homelessness, which will examine the extent of the problem in a national sample of 60 cities, and the efforts, by both government agencies and private organizations, to deal with the situation. The study will examine three topics:

(1) Estimates of the Homeless. How reliable are current estimates of the number of homeless people? On what assumptions are they based? How does the scope of the problem vary between cities of varying size and in different regions? What trends are observable over the past year, two years, five years?

(2) Characteristics of the Homeless. Previous research suggests that the homeless are comprised of several very diverse groups. What are their characteristics -- in terms of age, length of homelessness, mental illness status, substance abuse problems, etc. Are there significant changes in the kinds of people who have become homeless over the last few years? What factors, on the individual level, seem to be causes or precipitants of homelessness?

(3) Responses to the Problem. What action is being taken to address the needs of the homeless and by whom (private groups, city, State or Federal agencies)? What are the financial costs and who is bearing them? Are current policies adequate to meet the needs of the homeless? The study will focus on the provision of shelter facilities and the match between the demand for and supply of shelters for different groups of the homeless.

The methodology of the study involves collecting information on the situation in 60 communities. Data will be drawn from existing reports and surveys, supplemented by site visits and phone conversations with city officials, voluntary agencies, and other experts. A survey of a sample of shelter administrators in these cities will be conducted.

Objective

The purpose of this contract is to furnish HUD with the capability and expertise to carry out a rapid-turnaround telephone survey of approximately 200 shelter providers in 60 cities including sample selection, questionnaire design, a set of frequency distributions on all collected items, and a data file.

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Statement of Work

A. Work Tasks

1. Initial Meeting

The contractor shall meet with HUD staff in order to understand (a) the overall scope and purpose of the study on homelessness and (b) the aims of the shelter survey. HUD staff will explain the tasks to be carried out by the contractor and specify time constraints.

2. Development of Shelter Questionnaire

The contractor shall develop and pretest a questionnaire for the shelter survey, taking into account the issues discussed at the initial meeting. HUD will provide the contractor with a set of draft questions.

3. Sampling and Weights

The contractor will advise HUD on selecting a sample of 60 cities and, with the concurrence of HUD, select a sample of shelters within these cities. The contractor will develop weighting procedures for the city and shelter samples to be used in the analysis of the survey data to be collected. HUD will provide the names and phone numbers of the shelters from which the shelter sample will be drawn.

4. Preparation of OMB Package

The contractor shall assist HUD in the preparation of all forms required to obtain OMB clearance for the shelter survey.

5. Conduct Telephone Interviews

The contractor will interview by telephone approximately 200 shelter administrators once HUD and OMB have approved the questionnaire.

6. Survey Data-Set

Upon completion of the telephone interviews, the contractor shall provide a useable, cleaned and verified data set, as well as frequency distributions for all variables.

7. Second Meeting

Following the delivery of the data set, the contractor shall meet with HUD to discuss any methodological issues or substantive findings arising out of the survey. HUD may also call on the contractor to provide by telephone consultation any subsequent clarifications found necessary.

B. Product Delive-ables Schedule

1. Initial Meeting will be held within five work days of contract execution date, at mutual convenience of HUD and contractor.

2. Development of sampling plan and approval by HUD should be completed within five days of contract execution; selection of shelter sample to be drawn within one week of receiving all shelter neames and numbers from HUD. Written description of sampling procedures for 60 cities and 200 shelters is due February 1, 1984.

3. Shelter Questionnaire is to be developed and approved by HUD within one week of HUD's submitting draft questions to contractor.

4. OMB survey clearance forms should be prepared and delivered to HUD within one week after shelter questionnaire is approved by HUD.

5. Initial frequency distributions on all items are to be delivered to HUD within three weeks of OMB approval. Revised weighted frequency distributions of cleaned data should be delivered within four weeks of OMB approval.

7. Data set will be delivered in the form of an SPSS-readable tape. The tape shall be unlabelled, 9 track external BCD, BPI 1,600, characters/record not to exceed 5,120. The original copies of the questionnaires will remain the property of HUD, and shall be returned at this time. Data documentation shall also be sent at the time the data set is delivered.

7. A second meeting will be held at HUD's convenience. Also, telephone consultation shall be provided on an as-needed basis. In total, all consultation (including the initial and second meetings, and telephone calls) is not to exceed 20 hours.

C. Reports of Work

Reports of work as specified above and in the enclosure "Reports of Work" are necessary.

JUSTIFICATION OF NEED

The Division of Policy Studies is conducting an in-house study of the homeless. One part of that study involves a data collection effort involving a telephone survey of approximately 200 shelters of the homeless in 60 cities. The contractor possesses specialize d sampling, survey design, and telephone interviewing expertise, as well as telephone survey equipment which allows for direct data entry of interview information; this expertise and survey equipment are not available in-house. The contractor's contribution, therefore, is needed for completion of the planned study of the homeless.

JUSTIFICATION FOR USE OF TASK ORDER

The preferred approach to secure the survey capability needed for this study is via task order because the existing IQC was awarded competitively and because timing is crucial in this study. A final report is needed by March 1984 because of the Department's need for immediate information on the homeless issue. This schedule effectively precludes conducting a new competitive procurement for such services.

Mr. ERICKSEN. HUD attempted to estimate the number of homeless people in four ways, which are described in this report. Having done this, they came to the conclusion that there were between 250,000 and 350,000 homeless people in the United States. The fact that there were four different estimates which seem to show the same result gives a false impression of consistency.

I think that the problem of these estimates is like a house. If the bricks that are used to build a house are insufficient, the house you wind up with will also be insufficient. I think there are two main problems. One is hardly anybody knows how many homeless people there are in their local areas.

A person who is operating a shelter in the Bowery in Lower Manhattan in New York is doing all that he or she can do to accommodate the people who come to that shelter. That person might have some idea of the number of homeless people who are trying to use his shelter in his area, but knowing how many homeless people that are on Long Island or knowing how many homeless people there are in New Jersey is totally irrelevant to that person's job. It is not something that person would be expected to think about.

So somebody said to him how many homeless people are there in the New York Ranally metropolitan area? Most likely he would give a guess, shrug his shoulders, or simply refer to some newspaper report or study that he had seen.

The second problem is that most people don't know what their metropolitan area is. Now, the definition that most statisticians use is a census definition traditionally known as the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area. When I teach my classes in demography at Temple University it takes me 2 hours to explain to my students what it is and these are students who are highly motivated to learn. It is a long and complicated definition that you would not expect a lay person to know. The Ranally marketing area is an even more obscure concept. As an academician I had never heard of it. The reason I had never heard of it is it is primarily used for commercial purposes. That book Dr. Appelbaum has costs $235. I don't need it in my library. I had to go read it just for purposes of creating this testimony, so I doubt the typical shelter operator knew what it was.

Now, approach I consisted of an analysis of published estimates of homeless people and this is table 1 of the HUD report. The HUD researchers were able to find estimates for 37 cities, which are listed here. In 17 of the cities there was only one estimate, like 291 in Birmingham, 250 in Brockton, and so forth. For 20 of the cities there was a range of estimates. In Chicago from 12,000 to 25,000; for New York from 36,000 to 50,000. When you add up the high numbers, as the HUD researchers did, the sum is approximately 211,000.

Now, the assumption of the first estimate, and let me say the objective of the first estimate was to calculate an upper bound on the number of homeless people. So what the HUD researchers did, they said we are going to assume that the rate of homelessness is the same in the areas where the estimates are provided as they are in the rest of the country.

If you add up the populations of these 37 cities you come to about 28 million. That is a little bit less than one-eighth of the national population. You multiply the 211,000 by the factor of 8.1 approximately and you get an estimate of 1.77 million homeless people.

If you add up the low numbers by the way, let's just go with the low end, you come out with an estimate of 1.06 million people.

Now, what the HUD researchers did was they said we are going to assume that there are no homeless people in the remainders of the Ranally metropolitan areas associated with these cities. Now, in New York City, as Professor Appelbaum has told you, the Ranally metropolitan area covers a population of 16 million in 3 States and 24 counties. Assuming that there are no homeless people in the remainder of the New York Ranally metropolitan area means that you assume that there are no homeless people in Westchester, Suffolk, and Nassau Counties, where HUD's own survey indicated that there were thousands.

It also forces you to assume that there are no homeless people in cities like Newark and Jersey City. In the Philadelphia Ranally metropolitan area you are forced to assume that there are no homeless people in Camden, Wilmington, and Trenton. The list goes on.

In addition to that, some of these numbers it turns out don't even apply to cities. What I tried to do was go back to the original sources and find out where these numbers came from. Now, some of these numbers came from a Governor's Commission that has the name Mario Cuomo attached t [illegible] and they turn out to be numbers written on a blackboard for which there is no particular explanation.

I was drawn to this number 291. Now, you will notice most of the numbers on this table have lots of zeros, which indicate people were estimating and rounding out the numbers. This 291 in Birmingham looked like a number that somebody must have really known. So I actually called up a Mr. Stephen Cleghorn, who did the study that provided the 291. Two hundred and ninety-one is the number of shelter beds in the city of Birmingham. Obviously the number of shelter beds is less than the number of homeless people in the city. The number of homeless people in the city is far less than the number of homeless people in the Ranally metropolitan area.

In Jacksonville, the number 150 to 300 was obtained from a study called a Downtown Derelict Study which was also replicated in several other cities on this list. I believe it is where you have the footnote F. I spoke to Marian Chambers, who told me that the number 150 to 300 was simply her estimate of how many homeless people there were in the downtown area of Jacksonville. She used the term chronic homeless people. So each of these numbers are particularly small.

Now, the second approach involved a survey of people that HUD designated as experts in 60 Ranally metropolitan areas. I received the same questionnaires from 20 of the largest Ranally metropolitan areas that Professor Appelbaum received.

The first problem is we need to know how the list of experts was defined. Who was considered to be an expert? In some cases police departments are asked the questions. By what criteria are police experts? Are there people who were left out? It is important to us to see the list of experts in each city so we can know how the sampling was done. Without that information, we cannot evaluate the reliability of the sample that was done by HUD.

Second, there are problems with the questions that Professor Appelbaum referred to. Respondents respond about their city, not about the Ranally metropolitan area.

Third, when you look at the questionnaires it is clear that most people did not know how to answer the questions. By my calculations only 45 percent of HUD's respondents were able to answer the question of how many homeless people there were without being extremely hesitant. The HUD questionnaire has a category, "very hesitant to answer."

Finally, the answers varied widely. For example, in Cleveland one person said there were 200 homeless people. Another person said there were 2,000 homeless people. They can't both be right. I suspect when people gave low numbers they were giving numbers like the number of shelter beds, the number of homeless people in their neighborhoods, perhaps the number of homeless people in their city.

Finally, HUD has appeared to give different weights to different answers in a very strange manner. It is important in order to evaluate for us to know which questionnaires receive which weights. None of this information has been made available, so the evaluation of the second approach lacks that information.

Approach III was the Westat survey. Now, that survey appears to overcome some of the problems of the HUD survey because standard questions were asked of all respondents. However, even here there are serious problems. Only about two-thirds of the respondents were able to answer how many homeless people there were. These answers varied extremely widely. In table 1 of my testimony I presented the ranges.

In Philadelphia one person said there were a 100 homeless people. Another person said there were 10,000 homeless people. I believe there are 2,000 shelter beds in the city of Philadelphia. I don't know what the person who said 100 could have been thinking about.

Approach IV was obtained from the casual count of the U.S. Census. The casual count was an attempt by the Census Bureau to count people who did not live in housing units. It was done under the stress of a census that was behind schedule and had a limited budget. The Census Bureau had so much to do it is doubtful that they were able to direct the resources to the casual count they would have liked to.

Even so, the casual count was never intended to count certain important categories of homeless people. The Census Bureau never went into abandoned buildings. The Census Bureau never looked under bridges and expressways; never looked in cars and trucks where homeless people could be found. The 23,237 homeless persons counted by the casual count—strike the word homeless people—is surely an underestimate of how many there were in those districts.

Now, I have been shown a copy of the letter dated November 27, 1985, from June Koch to Mr. Gonzalez. I would like to make three comments on this letter. Where it says your Secretary's request was for further information on the weighting procedures used in the study, the question that was asked of Dr. Koch and what we really need to know is what weights were assigned to what questionnaire.

The paragraph that starts your third request was for information on reasons why Ranally metropolitan areas were used in the study. What we are trying to find out is in approach I, for example, where the estimates were for cities, why were Ranally metropolitan areas substituted as the denominator of the ratio?

In approach II, where the questionnaire asked specifically about cities, why were Ranally metropolitan areas again used as a denominator of the ratio?

On page 3 where it says finally your fourth request was for a breakdown of the 1980 census figures. What we need to know is what were the census districts and what were the actual populations of the areas where the causal count was conducted?

According to my best estimates, the casual count only covered about 8 percent of the national population, not the 12 percent that HUD states in its report.

That concludes my testimony.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Ericksen follows:]

HEARINGS BEFORE THE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development
of the
Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs
December 4, 1985
Testimony of Dr. Eugene Ericksen

I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

In its 1984 report on the homeless and emergency shelters, the Department of Housing and Urban Development undertook an inherently impossible task: estimating the number of homeless people in the United States. HUD purported to make this estimate by using four different statistical approaches, but relying principally on the estimates of local "experts" in various cities across the United States. Ultimately, the data HUD collected turned out to be scientifically worthless, and ought to have been thrown away. Instead of scrapping the project, however, the researchers attempted to use the data to project a national estimate. The methodology employed in the projection of these data was seriously flawed, compounding the problems of the researchers. Moreover, these flaws biased the estimate downward, resulting in a serious underestimation of the homelessness problem.

In its first approach, HUD collected the highest prior published estimates of homelessness in 37 cities, and used these to calculate an "upper bound" estimate of homelessness nationwide. HUD, however, disregarded the geographical area to which these estimates were meant to apply. Without accounting for the context in which they were created, HUD's use of the prior published estimates is not scientifically valid.

The second and third approaches employed by HUD involved surveying shelter managers and others presumed to be knowledgeable about homelessness, and asking them to estimate the homeless in their area. The majority of people contacted either stated that they could not provide an estimate, or gave estimates only after much hesitation. Moreover, the estimates received varied enormously, indicating that many of the responses were simply wild guesses with no factual basis. The wide variation in responses also indicates that the respondents had different conceptions as to the geographical area within which they were to confine their estimate; as written, neither the HUD nor the Westat survey give the interviewee an adequate description of this area. In either event, the variety of responses should have indicated to the researchers that their interviewees were confused, and that the data provided by them were unreliable.

The first three methods share strong similarities in that they rely on information given by local experts. Indeed, it is likely that a number of people who provided the studies and reports used in calculating the first estimate also were among the respondents relied upon in Methods 2 and 3. A major flaw with all three methods is that no one knows the number of homeless people in any of the local areas. To give an example of this, in 1984, New York City's Human Resource Administration published a comprehensive report on the numbers of and problems faced by homeless persons in that city. They wrote, "No reliable estimate of the number of homeless people in New York City exists." In the same report, detailed tabulations on numbers of shelters, numbers of beds in shelters, occupancy rates in these shelters, numbers of persons turned away from shelters, and characteristics of the homeless were provided.

The fourth method utilized by HUD involved aggregating an estimate of the number of homeless in shelters with a number derived from the Census Bureau's 1980 "Casual Count," taken by HUD to be a reliable estimate of the number of homeless "on the streets." However, the Casual Count was never intended to be an estimate of the homeless, as HUD has defined that term; it was, rather, a canvassing of employment offices, food stamp centers, and pool halls for members of the population that had not already been counted in some other way. Moreover, the Casual Count has been subject to criticism, on the grounds that it was greatly understaffed and ultimately ineffective. Given this criticism, HUD's use of the Casual Count as a reliable estimate of the homeless "on the streets" is scientifically unjustifiable.

To these series of meaningless numbers, HUD applied statistical methods which were sure to result in a low national estimate of homelessness. Most importantly, HUD manipulated the denominator over which the estimates were applied in order to ensure a low result. All responses to the Westat survey, and most of the responses to the HUD survey, were treated as estimates of homelessness within the respondent's Ranally Metropolitan Area (RMA), a geographical area which is generally quite large, and the boundaries of which were almost surely unknown to the respondents. Moreover, even in the areas where HUD attempted to aggregate local responses, serious undercounting occurred; many jurisdictions were not surveyed at all, and were effectively assumed to contain no homeless. Use of these RMA "estimates" to produce a nationwide total amplified these errors, resulting in a seriously flawed and understated estimate.

In addition to making obvious methodological errors, HUD has ensured that the results of its surveying cannot be reproduced, by failing to reveal important steps taken in the process of developing its estimates. For one thing, neither HUD nor Westat have specified how they identified the local "experts" within each RMA, or what steps were taken to ensure that all "experts" were included in the sampling pool; arbitrary criteria could have been used to eliminate potential respondents with a political orientation adverse to HUD's. Moreover, in evaluating responses to its survey, HUD applied weights to each response on the grounds that some were more reliable than others. HUD has not revealed which responses received which weights, and the examples I studied indicated that a low estimate was more likely to receive greater weight than a high estimate.

What follows is an in-depth critique of all four approaches utilized by HUD in developing its estimate of the homeless. I will focus on (1) factors which tend to render HUD's raw data unreliable, and (2) ways in which HUD's use of the data lowered its final estimate of homelessness.

II. CRITIQUE OF THE FOUR APPROACHES

A. Approach 1 - Calculating an "Upper Bound" Estimate From Available Studies

The HUD researchers first attempted to calculate an "upper bound" estimate based on available studies and interviews. Such estimates were found in 37 cities, located in 34 Ranally Metropolitan Areas (RMA's). In 17 of the 37 cities, only one estimate was available. In the remaining 20 cities there was a range of estimates; the low and high estimates, along with the single estimates for the other 17 cities, are given in Table 1 of the HUD report. HUD's "upper bound" estimate was calculated by totalling the 17 single estimates and 20 high estimates, dividing this total by the populations of the 34 RMA's to obtain a ratio of homeless persons per capita, then multiplying this ratio by the population as a whole. The result reached through this calculation was an "upper bound" of 586,000 homeless persons.

As a method of calculating an "upper bound," HUD's approach is seriously flawed. The HUD researchers were willing to assume, for purposes of calculating their "upper bound," that there were no homeless people outside the 37 cities, but within the 34 RMA's. The HUD Report cites three justifications for this assumption:

> "There is consensus among observers that there are few homeless persons in suburban areas . . . most shelters and other facilities, such as soup kitchens and welfare agencies, are concentrated in the central city rather than the suburbs, and suburban ecology provides few sleeping places for those outside the shelters.

This assumption ignores the fact that many of HUD's own respondents, interviewed in the survey relied upon in the second approach, stated that there were large numbers of homeless people in suburban areas such as Westchester, Nassau, and Suffolk Counties, New York. Moreover, among the "suburban" areas for which it was assumed that there were no homeless are such large cities as Jersey City and Newark, New Jersey, Oakland, California, Wilmington, Delaware, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Tacoma, Washington, Saint Paul, Minnesota, and East Chicago, Gary, and Hammond, Indiana. These cities, which are within the RMA's of other, larger cities, clearly have large numbers of homeless persons.

I have checked many of the sources cited in Table 1 of the HUD Report. In many cases, such as Chicago and Philadelphia, the newspaper reports made it clear that cities were being referred to. Similarly, the estimates cited in the Governor's Report (Mario Cuomo) were clearly for cities. In other cases, the estimates were for even smaller populations. I spoke to Steve Cleghorn, who supplied the estimate of 291 for Birmingham, Alabama, cited in the Governor's Report. His estimate was based on the number of shelter beds available in the city; thus, he was not attempting to estimate the homeless in the city, let alone in the entire RMA. Similarly, Marion Chambers, who directed the "Downtown Derelects Study" of Jacksonville, Florida and other cities, has stated that her studies were designed to estimate the chronically homeless in downtown areas, areas much smaller than RMA's. Finally, Andrew Raubeson gave an estimate of 1,000 homeless people in the skid row area of Portland, Oregan; this area, again, is much smaller than the central city, which is in turn much smaller than the RMA.

It also seems clear that many of the sources relied on by HUD in its first approach were out of date by January of 1984, when preparation of the Report began. It is stated in page 16 of the HUD Report that "the number of homeless people is increasing, perhaps at a rate of 10 per cent per year." Given HUD's recognition of this growth in the homeless population, its use of estimates given for years at far back as 1981 and 1982 cannot be justified.

In keeping with its stated objective of calculating an "upper bound," HUD should have used the population of the 37 cities as a denominator when the ratio of homeless persons per capita was calculated. The sum of these populations was approximately 27.95 million; and the application of this figure to the population of the 37 cities results in a ratio of homeless persons per capita equal to .00756. Applying this to the 1984 population estimate gives an upper bound estimate of 1.77 million homeless.

It is interesting to note that, even if HUD had used the lowest rather than the highest published estimates for each city, appplying these estimates to the proper population would nevertheless have generated an overall estimate far higher than the 586,000 figure quoted in the HUD Report. If the "high" figures, listed in Table 1, are replaced with the "low" figures found in that Table, the estimated number of homeless people in the 37 cities is 125,961, implying a ratio of .00451 homeless persons per capita. Applying this ratio to the population estimate provides an estimate of 1.06 million homeless persons in January 1984. This estimate alone, which is clearly not an "upper bound," is large enough to call into question the validity of the much lower estimates generated by HUD's other three approaches.

B. Approach 2 - Interviews with a National Sample of Local Experts

The second approach relied upon information provided by shelter operators, social service providers, city officials, newspapers, and other "knowledgeable" observers. It was intended to improve upon the first method in four ways:

(a) A sample of sixty areas was selected, and the scientific selection rendered them representive of all metropolitan areas in the nation.

(b) Several experts were interviewed in each local area, giving ranges of estimates in each place.

(c) The reliability of each of the local estimates was examined.

(d) A standard questionnaire was used for each respondent.

The national estimate resulting from this study was 254,000 homeless persons. In spite of the improvements which were intended, the resulting estimate is hardly more scientific than that given by Approach 1.

1. Estimates by "Experts"

The survey relies exclusively on information given to HUD by local "experts." However, it seems clear from the responses that most of these "experts" were not experts at all. According to the completed questionnaires, fewer than half of those surveyed were willing to make an estimate without a great deal of hesitation; one third refused to provide any estimate whatsoever. This low response rate should have been read as a signal to HUD that any final estimate based on the answers of these experts would be unreliable.

Moreover, Table 2 of the HUD Report on page 14 demonstrates that there were wide variations in the estimates of those who did attempt to answer HUD's questions. In virtually all 60 cities, there are dramatic differences in the highest and lowest estimates. For instance, in New York the highest estimate was 50,000, the lowest 12,000; in Philadelphia, the highest estimate was 8,050, the lowest 450; in Los Angeles, the highest estimate was 39,000, the lowest 19,000. Some of these responses may have been wild guesses. In other cases, respondents may have given the number of public shelter beds; estimates may also have been of the number of persons staying in shelters, missions, or hotels and apartments vouchered for the homeless. The large range of answers indicates either that hardly anyone had a good idea of the right number, and many simply guessed, or more likely, estimated the size of a small component of the homeless population with which they were familiar.

There are good reasons why shelter operators and other local experts might not know how many homeless people there are. For one thing, the shelter operators and other providers are so busy running their facilities and taking care of the local clientele that they have little time or motivation to learn about the problem as a whole. Knowing how many homeless people there are in the New York Metropolitan area will not help you run your shelter in the Bowery when your beds are full every night and you have to turn people away. Secondly, many homeless people do not make use of publicly available facilities. They live "on the streets," and often make extensive attempts to conceal their whereabouts and identities. Indeed, HUD acknowledged this very point in its report:

> The group (of homeless persons living on the streets) is, for several reasons, very hard to count because some homeless persons are able to maintain a reasonably good personal appearance and behave 'normally' enough that they are often overlooked by casual observation. Furthermore, some homeless persons have an interest in concealing the places where they sleep, because they fear being harassed and victimized.

Shelter operators and other experts would have little idea of how many such people there were, and could not give a well-informed opinion. Therefore, since there is no good way of estimating how many homeless people there are in any local area, there can be no responsible way of adding the local estimates together to create a national estimate. This national estimate is no better than the local information upon which it is based.

2. There are several problems with the methodology employed by HUD in obtaining and evaluating the responses of local "experts" on homelessness, even assuming such "experts" were capable of estimating homelessness in a meaningful way. Some of these problems are the result of HUD's failure to provide enough information about its methods to make a critical evaluation possible; others clearly result in a serious underestimation of the homelessness problem.

a. Sampling

HUD developed its sample in two steps. First, a sample of 60 metropolitan areas was selected; local experts were then selected from within those areas. It is not at all clear, however, how the "local experts" were chosen within each of the 60 RMA's.

A necessary condition for a good sample is the construction of an inclusive frame, or list of all persons eligible for selection. To construct a frame in a metropolitan area, HUD would have needed to state its criteria for inclusion, and to be certain that its frame covered the entire metropolitan area. The HUD Report does not demonstrate that all available experts were interviewed nor that everyone interviewed was an expert. More importantly, several large jurisdictions were simply left out. I have examined all the questionnaires which were obtained in the 20 largest metropolitan areas included in the sample. In some of these, Pittsburgh and Cincinnati, for example, interviewing appears to have been limited to persons with offices located in or near the central city. No one was interviewed in the Kentucky part of the Cincinnati RMA nor even in any of the suburban Ohio counties. Turning to the Pittsburgh RMA, no one appears to have been interviewed outside Allegheny County, even though the RMA extends for miles beyond its borders. It is not at all clear who, if anyone, had the expertise to estimate the extent of homelessness in these outlying areas.

The situation is more serious in the larger areas like New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and Los Angeles. As explained by Professor Appelbaum, many important jurisdictions in these areas were simply left out. Only six of the 19 counties outside New York City were represented. In the Chicago RMA, no one was interviewed from Indiana, and in the Philadelphia RMA, interviews were obtained in only three suburban counties. No one was interviewed either in Trenton, New Jersey or Wilmington, Delaware.

b. The Questionnaire

The HUD questionnaire is poorly written. Even if the interviewees could have meaningfully estimated homelessness, and even if a valid and complete sample of estimates had been obtained, the sequence of questions asked by the interviewers, and the instructions given to them as to how to go about obtaining responses, would have rendered the survey invalid.

First of all, the sequence of questions asked led the respondents to believe that they were to estimate homelessness within their "city," whatever they perceived that geographical area to be. Question 1a asks about homelessness "in city;" question 1b queries the need for additional shelters "in this area." When finally asked, in question 3, for an estimate of homelessness, the interviewee is not provided with any geographical reference at all. It is clear, then, that unless additional questions not appearing on the questionnaire were asked, a Pittsburgh respondent would answer for Pittsburgh and a Cleveland respondent for Cleveland. These responses were, for the most part, applied over the RMA as a whole, resulting in an estimate of homelessness which is much too low.

It is possible that additional questions not appearing on the questionnaire were asked, and that through these questions the respondents were made to understand the geographical area to which their estimates were to correspond. However, it is a cardinal rule of survey research that only questions appearing on the questionnaire are to be asked of the respondent. Nondirective probes can be used, but only in a very limited fashion, to clarify what the respondent has said. Such a probe is often an expectant pause, repeating the respondent's answer, or simply asking: "what do you mean?" If the probing expands beyond these types of questions, the interviewer may in effect have changed the focus of the query, rendering results incomparable. For these reasons, it seems clear that the interviewees were not made aware in any scientifically reliable way of the geographical area within which they were to estimate homelessness.

It also seems clear, from the written instructions given interviewers and from perusal through several completed questionnaires, that the interviewers did not write down, verbatim, every statement made by the respondent. It appears that, on most of the questionnaires, summaries of responses were recorded. As stated in the Interviewers Manual of the prestigious Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan,

> The summarized recording lacks the true intensity and lustre of the respondent's reply. The problem is even more serious than this, however. The paraphrased answer actually distorts the meaning of the respondent's reply. The specific terms in which the

> respondent talks, the words he uses, and the length of his answer all provide important information.

A questionnaire upon which respondents' answers are not recorded verbatim lacks scientific credibility and should not be taken seriously.

(c) Weighting of Individual Responses

As discussed above, the fact that the estimates given by the interviewees varied so widely means that these estimates are inherently unreliable. The HUD researchers attempted to remedy for this lack of reliability by weighting each response according to criteria indicated in Appendix A. While HUD has made public the completed questionnaires used in the survey, the agency has refused to release any documents indicating which weights were applied to which questionnaires, or any instructions for translating the actual answers given by respondents into the categories given in Table A-4 of Appendix A. The data indicate that these weights may have been applied in a biased and arbitrary manner, in order to lower the final range for various cities.

For example, in Cleveland, 14 persons were interviewed, four of whom responded to the request for an estimate of homelessness. The four estimates were 200, 400, 650, and 2000. If these numbers are averaged, the result is 812.5. If the lower three are averaged, the result is 417. In Table 2, the "most reliable" range is given as 420-450. Clearly, the high estimate of 2,000 was simply omitted, and HUD provides no explanation of why this figure was given no weight in calculating the "most reliable" range.

In Pittsburgh, the range of estimates is given as 50 to 1500 and the most reliable range as 600 to 1,175. Among the 10 completed interviews in Pittsburgh, four contain estimates above 1,500; two are 2,200, and two are 3,000. If these four "high" estimates are omitted, and the other seven, including two estimates of 50, are averaged, the result is 700. Clearly the use of differential weights on the questionnaires influenced the results in a major way, yet HUD has refused to disclose these weights or to explain how they were applied.

C. Approach 3 - The Westat Survey

Westat, Inc. purported to provide an estimate of homelessness by surveying shelter managers in the same 60 cities covered by the HUD survey, separately gathering their estimates of the local homelessness problem and extrapolating a third national estimate. As such, the Westat survey was intended to independently corroborate the results reached by HUD under the other three approaches.

Unfortunately, the Westat survey suffers from many of the same deficiencies as the HUD survey, and therefore is also unreliable. Westat, like HUD, has neglected to provide sampling data, again, a potential source of bias that immediately calls the results into question. Moreover, Westat's "experts" were also very reluctant to provide estimates; only 63 of 91 respondents in the large metropolitan areas were willing to say how many homeless there are. Finally, the Westat questionnaire, like the HUD questionnaire, does not supply the interviewee with an adequate description of the geographical boundaries within which homelessness is to be estimated. Question 22 of the questionnaire, the only question relating to homelessness generally, asks the respondent to estimate homelessness within the "metropolitan area." Again, no further elaboration is provided for a term which will clearly mean different things to different people. Westat's apparent assumption that all respondents would equate "metropolitan area" with the complex concept of a Ranally Metropolitan Area is scientifically untenable.

The Westat questionnaire provoked responses which were even more widely varying than the responses received by HUD; this is a clear indication that the respondents either were not capable of making a valid estimate, or had different ideas as to what area to respond for, or both. A table indicating the range of responses for each of the 20 largest metropolitan areas surveyed by Westat is attached as an appendix to this testimony (Table 1).

D. Approach 4 - Aggregating Street and Shelter Counts

The fourth method differs from the first three in that, instead of relying on local "experts" to provide estimates of homelessness, HUD aggregated an estimate of persons living in shelters and similar quarters with an estimate of homeless persons "on the streets"; the "street" count was based on a "casual count" conducted for use in the 1980 census, and was verified via an extrapolation from local street counts undertaken in Phoenix, Pittsburgh, and Boston. As will be developed in the paragraphs that follow, however, the casual count was never intended to provide a complete count of homeless people not in shelters and, even if it were, it was not conducted in a comprehensive manner. Taking these two factors into consideration, the casual count is untenable as a component of any reliable estimate of homelessness. The local street counts, as well, were misused by HUD: in testimony before this committee last May, authors of both the Boston and Pittsburgh studies denied that the studies were intended to be a count of all homeless persons in their respective cities.

1. The Method of the Casual Count

The Casual Count took place during a two-week period in mid-May, 1980, several weeks after the Census began on April 1. Its purpose was to help improve the coverage of the census by adding persons not living in households. It was one of two procedures, M-Night being the other, specifically designed to count homeless people.

Most Americans were counted in 1980 by means of a mailout-mailback procedure. The Census Bureau compiled an advance list of addresses, and mailed Census forms to each one. Eighty-three percent of households mailed these forms back in, and the Census Bureau sent enumerators to obtain the needed information by personal interview from the rest. The large majority of the Census Bureau data collection budget was doubtlessly directed toward collecting census data from those households not mailing forms back in.

M-Night took place one week after Census Day, on the night of April 8 and the morning of April 9. Census enumerators were sent to places like missions and flophouses, bus and train stations, and all-night movies, to find and count persons who had no real homes. Some of the people counted by the Census Bureau on M-Night lived in shelters, the count was not meant to be limited only to the shelter populations.

The second procedure was the Casual Count, which took place a month or so later. Census enumerators were sent to other places likely to be frequented by homeless people -- employment offices, street corners, bars, and bus and train stations not visited on M-Night. Persons who looked like they might be homeless were contacted by the enumerators, and if it were determined that such persons had not been previously counted, they were asked to provide census information and were added to the count.

2. How the Design of the Casual Count Caused Some Homeless People to Be Excluded

In the Casual Count, census enumerators first had to notice those people who looked like they might be homeless. Next, they had to determine that such a person had not already been counted, and was in fact homeless. If a person contacted by an enumerator turned out not to be homeless, such a person could simply not be added. However, there was no way to prevent the opposite error. A homeless person who did not look the part would be ignored by a census enumerator.

Moreover, census enumerators only visited some of the places frequented by homeless people. In its definition of homeless people given on pages 7 and 8 of the Report, HUD researchers list many of the places where homeless people commonly spend the night. Among these are abandoned houses, city parks, cars, and trucks -- none of which were inspected by census enumerators. In Table 1, I have listed the places cited in the HUD Report, along with the major types of places the Census Bureau sent its enumerators to find homeless people. Two observations are in order:

First, M-Night procedures probably picked up many of the homeless people not living in shelters. It is reasonable to believe that many such persons were found in train and bus stations, all-night movies, and short-term jails. By the design of the Census, they would not have been included in the Casual Count; they therefore would not have been included in HUD's estimate of the homeless.

Second, there are many places housing homeless people which were covered neither by M-Night nor the Casual Count. Some of the prominent examples are listed above, but the main point is that in order to make a complete list of the homeless, the Census Bureau would have had to search every piece of nonresidential space, including alleys, steam tunnels, areas under bridges and aquaducts, and the rights-of-way along expressways and railroads. Such a task was not a feasible project for the already over-burdened Census Bureau.

3. Problems in Taking the Casual Count

The Census Bureau did not take the Casual Count in all census districts. Instead, the Bureau limited its use of the procedure to certain districts in large central cities where concentrations of homeless people could be expected. Unfortunately, these were also the districts where other census taking problems accumulated. For example, the mailback rates in these districts were often well below the national average of 83 percent. Rates below 60 percent were not uncommon in such districts, and they sometimes fell below even 50 percent. These tended to be areas with high crime rates, many poor people, and old housing, all of which made it hard to hire and keep good enumerators. The added burden caused by a low mailback rate and personnel problems made the census take longer in these areas. With all this work to do, the Census Bureau could not sensibly devote resources to a Casual Count procedure which was only expected to cause a 0.1 to 0.4 percent population increase in urban areas.

The operation of the Casual Count was evaluated by the General Accounting Office in a special report. The GAO sent observers to 27 census districts where the Casual Count was taken, and they reported that 26,166 people were counted; seven districts located in Chicago and San Francisco reported 16,000 persons counted, leaving just over 10,000 to have been counted in the remaining 20 districts. Since most of the remaining districts were located in New York, Los Angeles and Phildelphia, it is surprising that an average of only 500 people per district were found. The GAO Report commented on how few people were counted in these other urban areas.

New York City was the place which perhaps had more census-taking problems than any other. Because the census-taking problems were so apparent, and because a large undercount seemed inevitable, New York City and State sued the Census Bureau seeking to have the courts compel the Bureau to adjust census results to compensate for this undercount. As part of the evidence presented in this lawsuit, the City and State called Robert Rygor as a witness. As a Census Bureau employee in 1980, he supervised the Casual Count in the southern part of Manhattan.

Mr. Rygor was a Special Place Operations supervisor in Census District 2243. This district stretched from the southern tip of the island up to 14th Street on the East Side and 27th Street on the West Side. It included the Bowery, the Lower East Side, and Greenwich Village. In spite of this, the Census Bureau only planned to employ eight enumerators to take the Casual Count in District 2243, far too few in Mr. Rygor's estimation. In fact, the Census Bureau never had more than six people working on any one day. As a result, Mr. Rygor's team found a total of only 500 homeless people in two weeks, in Mr. Rygor's words, "a ludicrous shortfall." He went on to testify that if adequate resources had been provided, many more homeless people would have been counted.

Thus, the very design of the Casual Count, as well as the slipshod manner in which it was implemented, leads to the conclusion that it cannot reasonably be relied on as an estimate of the number of homeless "on the streets." Given its limited purpose and questionable success, it should not have been included in the HUD Report.

III. CONCLUSION

HUD based its estimate of homelessness on data that is inherently unreliable, since there is no accurate way to estimate the homeless. However, HUD compounded this folly by utilizing surveying and statistical methods that are at best undocumented, and at worst seriously flawed. While it may not be possible to say definitely that these methods were deliberately intended to systematically underestimate the homelessness problem, all of HUD's errors in fact resulted in an underestimation, rather than overestimation, of the number of homeless.

IV. Dr. Ericksen

Dr. Ericksen received his B.S. in Mathematics from the University of Chicago, and an M.S. in Statistics and Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Michigan. He is currently an Associate Professor in the Sociology Department at Temple University and Statistician at National Economic Research Associates. He and two graduate students from Temple, Lori Brown and Linda Matthews, studied the raw data and methodology employed by HUD in generating its four estimates of homelessness nationwide.

Table 1

Ranges of Estimates of Numbers of the Homeless for Individual Areas

Metropolitan Area (Number of Estimates)	Low Estimate	High Estimate	Ratio, High to Low
Philadelphia (5)	100	10,000	100.0
Houston (4)	200	9,000	45.0
San Francisco (4)	75	2,000	26.7
Detroit (2)	300	4,500	15.0
Kansas City (2)	40	500	12.5
Chicago (2)	2,000	20,000	10.0
Washington, D.C. (5)	2,000	20,000	10.0
Portland (3)	2,500	20,000	8.0
New York City (10)	6,000	40,000	6.7
Seattle (4)	1,500	10,000	6.7
Cincinnati (3)	1,000	5,000	5.0
Minneapolis (3)	599	2,000	3.3
Phoenix (4)	950	3,000	3.2
Baltimore (2)	10,500	20,000	1.9
Boston (2)	3,000	5,000	1.7
Los Angeles (3)	25,000	40,000	1.6
Cleveland (2)	500	600	1.2
Hartford (1)	Only one estimate		
Miami (1)	Only one estimate		
Pittsburgh (1)	Only one estimate		

SOURCE: Special worksheet obtained from Westat, Inc.

Table 2. Comparison of HUD Definition of the Homeless with Living Places Covered by Two "Special Place" Procedures, 1980 Census

Living Places Included in HUD Definition of the Homeless*	Living Places Covered by M-Night Procedure, 1980 Census**	Living Places Covered by Casual Count Procedure, 1980 Census***
Public or private emergency shelters	Flophouses	Employment offices
Streets, parks, and subways	Hotels, motels, and tourist rooms costing $4 per night or less	Bus and train stations(except for those covered on M-Night)
Bus terminals, railroad stations, and airports	Missions	Welfare offices
Under bridges and aqueducts	Train and bus stations	Food stamp centers
Abandoned buildings without utilities	All-night movies	Pool halls
Cars and trucks	Short-term jails	Street corners in some areas
Any other public or private space not designed for shelter		
Persons temporarily in jails or hospitals who are otherwise homeless		

*Department of Housing and Urban Development, A Report to the Secretary on the Homeless and Emergency Shelters

**U.S. Bureau of the Census, Special Place Operations Manual, D-565, 1980 Census, U.S. Government Printing Office, p. 153.

***U.S. Bureau of the Census, Special Place Operations Manual. D-565, 1980 Census, U.S. Government Printing Office, p. 223.

Chairman Gonzalez. Thank you very much Dr. Ericksen.

The subcommittee, on January 25, 1984, did something that was a departure from the traditional congressional practice of committee hearings when we held a hearing in the DC Shelter for the Homeless, which is privately being administered. We had witnesses ranging from Governor Cuomo, who incidentally does have a background and knowledge of actual experience on the question of housing generally and we had Mayor Washington of Chicago we had Mayor Barry of DC and Mayor Morial of New Orleans. I believe we had the deputy mayor from Boston and there at that precise moment in the evening by an increase of about 250, you had somewhere around 1,000 being serviced in that shelter. Ten days later the President in a national report or remark or speech or conference, said if anyone is homeless in this country, in America, he is homeless through choice because he wants to be homeless.

I believe with that sort of assessment HUD has impelling need to establish some kind of criteria that would rebut the presumptive conclusions based on the all-day hearing that we had and the presentation by the witnesses, every one of whom said we have a very serious problem of homelessness.

In examining the report that subsequently came forth from HUD the prefatory statement by the Secretary I think inadvertently disclosed that the whole purpose of the study was intended to bring about the collusion that there was a minimal problem of homelessness in America. All you have to do is read that prefatory remark the way I interpreted it. I feel that politics of the situation aside, we have the overriding duty and necessity to confront and try to overcome, in some way accept the responsibility of overcoming this very serious problem.

I think the Scriptures reveal the first notorious example of homelessness or lack of shelter with Joseph and Mary unable to find accommodations and having to go to a manger. Well, today there are no mangers and if Joseph and Mary were to come forth today they would either be in a car or if they weren't in a car, they would have to double-up in some shelter or whatever the community would provide as temporary shelter, if any.

But I have witnessed families actually living in automobiles. In my district last January 12 we had an unprecedented snowstorm—there had been no record, no extant record of the snow precipitation, snowfall, that we had. It created a great deal of havoc. For 3 days the city was paralyzed. The question of shelter then became very dramatic because one person froze to death on the streets.

I visited the lines of the shelter that had been provided after much controversy by the Ministerial Alliance of San Antonio, at the beginning of the attention of this problem 3 years ago when I went back to my district. I approached the city council, which incidentally was receptive to it. The mayor there is a very dynamic, very responsive individual and he promised to look into it because the only thing we had was the Salvation Army. But they would provide what was the customary things for what we used to call the ne-er-do-wells, the alcoholics, the wanderers, the hobos, as we used to say. All these would be provided, there would be overnight shelter, but not for families.

So I made some statements and the mayor was supportive. So finally they diverted some community development block grant funds and then as soon as we were able to establish that original $60 million national fund they were able to use FEMA to obtain some funds and then they began to have a temporary shelter which served the beginning of this year. I visited the lines from the very beginning. In late February I visited that place, which wouldn't open its doors until 6 p.m. In the meanwhile if it was raining, it was very pitiful to see the line of huddled figures lining around the building waiting for 6 p.m., getting wet.

So when we went in there to protest that, I had an altercation with the manager. He said I have orders. I don't open the door. So finally I persuaded him. But there were 193 individuals, and for the first time this year I saw in those lineups—because I have made a total of about seven visits to the line over the last 2 years—saw children 3 years old, 5 years old, with their mother for the first time.

There was a problem as to how they could be housed in the same long room with the other individuals and for how long. Now, it was a departure from the usual order before. That is, when I visited the lines before there were no children. I don't think I met anybody that seemed to be under the age of 20.

However, I also talked to the young, I would say middle thirties and one individual in particular with whom I conversed and said he proceeded from Pueblo, CO. He had been an employee of a steel mill there. That situation in Pueblo and the rise in the record of foreclosures impelled me to submit after many months of consideration and evaluating the old Homeowners Loan Corp., what we called the 1983 Emergency Home Mortgage Assistance Program. We managed to get it out of the House of Representatives but it languished in the Senate and died.

But it was very, very sad for me to see this individual tell me that he had had a home in Pueblo that he lost because he became unemployed, that he had parked his family, which consisted of a wife and one child, with relatives in the northern part of Texas and was wandering, had come to San Antonio because somebody told him they thought maybe he could find a job.

This is a situation that the statistics don't reveal, so that even with the best statistical count, we still have no way of evoking the human misery and passion of homelessness. So when we calculated deficiencies in statistical counts—I will accept the term that Dr. Appelbaum used about sloppy but using it is adequate enough. I think it was more than sloppy, it was what in law we say is with malice aforethought. And it is tragic.

Anyway, I thought I would communicate with you this morning because you have done an excellent job and give you the fruits of some of the hearings we have had.

On October 14 we had a hearing in Houston, all day hearing. On the 15th in Dallas, TX. In Houston, as it turned out the most startling thing developing was the fact that we had witnesses who were dealing with the situation everyday in Houston. With respect to undocumented or illegal or whatever you want to call them now, mostly Central Americans, and it was quite startling to hear that estimate ranges from 150,000 to 200,000 undocumented people in

Houston alone. One of the church related groups was concerned about the inadequacies of shelter and particularly among this group.

Another witness directly associated with the Greater Metropolitan Houston area's concern about homelessness gave us an estimate and if you are interested what we can do is make available to you this testimony, because they gave us exact figures. At no time did the witnesses estimate that there were less than 20,000 homeless in Houston.

Now, here in your report—well, Dr. Ericksen, you have the HUD in which they show Houston with a low estimate of 200, highest estimate 9,000. I know I am not a statistician, but by golly, when you have that erratic, wide range from 200 to 9,000 estimates I know that nobody is really learning how to count.

Then, Dr. Appelbaum, you show in your—well, it is your exhibit 4, Houston, you have 999, then 9,999, then 2,000. Then underneath the 9,000 then 560, then 2,000. What is the explanation for those figures? Do you total the 2,000, 9,000, 500 and 200?

Mr. APPELBAUM. Well, HUD claims that when they got more than one estimate—this is the Westat survey and they claim they averaged. I don't know how you average numbers that range from 200 to 9,000.

Chairman GONZALEZ. I know. I don't think what they meant was they were going to total that and then average.

Mr. APPELBAUM. They say they averaged it.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Well, we had live and kicking witnesses with also representatives of the city of Houston present, who didn't rebut the estimates at all. In fact, one of them told me in private he thought they were very conservative and estimated a figure of 50,000. Now, even in Dallas we had one witness that injected the question of homelessness but I forget—his range was also in the thousands there but I forget the number. So I just don't know what more can be done in the way of producing a statistical, evaluative estimate that is fairly reliable other than what has been done, and what you have done to help us get some kind of an assessment.

As I said before and earlier, it is no concern to me to try to dispute or get into motivations. It is an inescapable conclusion in my mind what the motivating factors were, but not to engage in a question of well instead of 2 million, you have 350,000, but a question of what do we do even about 350,000, assuming that that is an accurate figure?

I really want to thank you very much, because with your expertise and your absolutely politically uninterested objective assessment, you have enabled us to confirm what some of us had suspected as laymen in hearing the live and kicking witnesses, not only here in DC but outside.

I was in San Diego a year ago in October and there, for instance—I don't see them listed—but San Diego accepts the fact that they have a very severe homelessness problem and they produced and handed me the first addition of their first report, a very comprehensive report, on homelessness that they had expended quite a bit of money on. In San Diego, as you know, has a very agreeable climatic situation and yet they have homelessness problems.

So I feel that legislatively the task before us is to try to maintain the meager authorizations and appropriations and then hope that on the additive end of the thing that there will be a bona fide attempt to administer even those meager funds to the maximum efficiency possible. It has been some concern to us legislatively as to whether the best additive area of responsibility should be FEMA, the Federal Emergency Agency, or HUD.

I have always felt it would be far more appropriate to have HUD. On the other hand, a year ago, of course, again January 20, 1984 was the beginning of an election year—I mean 1984. By October 1984, it was a highly political year and the local Washington situation gained some national attention and even then, there was quite a bit of conflict on an interagency sort of basis as to just one, should there be a responsibility, two, to what extent could it be discharged, and three, to what extent could it be accepted. So we have reached a point here where this hearing today——

Mr. FRANK. Mr. Chairman, would you yield?

Chairman GONZALEZ. Certainly.

Mr. FRANK. I appreciate it, Mr. Chairman. I am glad you called a hearing. We may hit that 11 call. Before we do, I want to followup on where you were.

I am very pleased we have been joined by the gentleman from Minnesota, who has done more to keep the issue alive than anyone else with the exception of yourself. I didn't get to hear the testimony, but I was given copies yesterday and was able to read it.

I am distressed that HUD simply refused to comment. I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if you would clarify for us that they were invited and that this is not a case where they said that there was a schedule conflict or that this wasn't a convenient date, but rather they just said they are not going to discuss it with us.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Well, HUD felt, according to the word we got, that they had supplied us with an answer, for instance in the letter we got from Dr. Koch, a letter earlier that we had received from the Secretary himself, that they had given us about all they could, that it would serve no purpose other than it would be sort of needless repetition of appearances for them to have any presence in today's hearing. It is our hope that when we have our next hearing, which we intend to have, that we can persuade a HUD spokesman to be present.

I feel that it is important that if we don't work together, no matter how differences may arrive between us, then I don't see any point in us legislating if we can't have an administration of the programs we have, but they said the reason they thought it was unnecessary is it would be a needless repetition.

Mr. FRANK. Mr. Chairman, if you would yield further, that distresses me. There are issues where all of us get a little political. We are talking here of as grave a moral issue as confronts this country.

Chairman GONZALEZ. That is right.

Mr. FRANK. In the midst of the prosperity we have and enjoy, for us to know that other Americans are literally homeless in this kind of weather is simply a moral disgrace. Blame can be apportioned all the way around but it is clear to me as I read this, and I look at what we have got, that we have no policy to deal with the homeless in this country. There were some complicated issues that the Government has to deal with and there were problems involving mental illness. All of those are irrelevant. It is not complicated to provide a warm bed for individuals who won't otherwise have any place to sleep in sub-zero temperatures and we ought to be able to do that much better than we have.

I would urge you—and I know you would be supportive, and I think others would—to have a hearing on this and invite HUD, HHS, and FEMA, so we don't get buck passing. If they don't come voluntarily, this is an appropriate time for subpoenas, because there ought to be a conversation among all of those who have the policy responsibilities. We want to stipulate that nobody is going to be talking about blaming anybody for what has happened. Let's just ask some of these questions: What are we doing now for the homeless, what is happening?

I know HUD said in its task order when they authorized Westat to do the study, that time is crucial and that the report was needed by March of 1984 "because of the department's need for immediate information on the homeless issue."

We are approaching the second anniversary of this particular task order and I don't know what they did with the information and I think we have to ask them. So I think it is essential that this subcommittee have the responsible administrative officials speak before us, if necessary, to answer a very simple question: In this wealthy nation which we all want to believe is also a compassionate nation, how are we going to provide something very basic—minimal shelter for people who are otherwise homeless?

It hasn't happened yet. We have put through some legislation, the gentleman from Minnesota was very active in putting it through. It is now awaiting some action in the Senate. I think all the parties have to be brought together. I admire your diligence and I think we are ready to do the next step.

There are some questions not answered by this testimony. The biggest question is why HUD doesn't want to talk about the report. What are we going to do to provide homes for people who are homeless? I hope we would be able to do that shortly.

Mr. **Bartlett**. Would the chairman yield?

Chairman **Gonzalez**. Yes, just a moment.

I want to assure my dear friend and colleague, it is our intention to persuade rather than coerce—I don't know what to do about a subpoena. I think that persuasive power is far more effective, and it is my hope—we intend to have another hearing—at which time we do hope to have a spokesman from HUD, so if the gentleman will trust me, we will stay on it.

Mr. **Frank**. Mr. Chairman, it has been my experience that subpoenas are marvelously persuasive, but I have been glad to do as I have for 5 years, defer to your leadership. I think your concern about this has been paramount.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. One further thing, and we will yield to you on this, and then it will round out and conclude what I have to say or ask of the witnesses.

I will ask unanimous consent to submit some specific questions to both witnesses in time for you to receive the transcript and reply. But in the meanwhile, I did think it was important to bring to your attention some of the things that we found out and have in these field hearings, plus the fact that other aspects that are seldom taken into account. For instance, I remember it, in my own hometown, again the direct connection between poverty, crowdedness, density, spacial limitation and communicable diseases like TB.

It will interest you to know I have been in contact with the Center for Communicable Diseases in Atlanta and in DC. In the homeless area you have had an increase of better than 15 percent in the rate of tuberculosis. In Boston specifically in the homeless area in just 1½ years you have had an increase of 18½ percent. I thought the scientists should be aware that there are more than just statistical or political factors. Practical factors of disease and the subsequent cost ultimately to the country to solve that problem.

The question of violence is attendant with the question of lack of shelter, density, overcrowdedness. I have not yet gotten the statistics to tie that in but on TB I think we should realize that it is very significant to tie in 18½-percent increase in Boston alone in this year of homelessness alone.

So with that, I yield to my colleague from Texas.

Mr. Bartlett. I thank the chairman for yielding on the prior point with my good friend from Massachusetts.

I would just inquire of the chairman as to whether the next hearing will be on the public policy solution surrounding the homeless, the solution of temporary shelter versus alleviating the underlying causes or both. Perhaps legislative or administrative positions or both.

It would seem to me to be far more persuasive than anything else to have others here, including HUD, and to have a hearing on the solutions to the problems and the public policy issues as opposed to the methodology used in disparaging studies, but this hearing is on methodology.

Chairman Gonzalez. Let me reply that is our intention. The reason I said what I did to Mr. Frank was I agree. You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar.

Mr. Frank. Would you yield?

Chairman Gonzalez. In just a minute. But you must understand also that we have had experiences, for instance, when we had the Emergency Home Mortgage Assistance Act, we had the Secretary before us and he said right there for the record we don't believe in this. We don't think it should ever come about. If you do, if the Congress brings it about, we will do what we can, meaning to administer.

Well, that has left a bad taste because congressional policy, the enactment of policy, we are the national policymaking body. The creation of programs to follow the policy provided by the Congress essentially has to be administered by the executive branch. So that is the only reason I see that it is important that we elicit some acknowledgement of a commitment to resolving the problem, and then we would not be kind of spinning our wheels and devising legislative answers.

We have, for instance, what I call the Vento amendment, which provided the authorization for a program on homelessness and what we had hoped originally 3 years ago, to obtain a $100 million turned out we had approximately appropriation of $60 million and there we had a great deal of disputation not only here among us but among the administrative agencies as to just how necessary that amount was. So I will say you know, without attempting to get into a donnybrook about anticipating motives on the part of the administration, that it is essential that we get some input from the administrative branch or the executive branch that is going to have the responsibility of administering the policies that we finally can forge here among us.

Mr. BARTLETT. If the chairman would just yield briefly, and then I will yield back.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Certainly. The gentleman has the time. You are recognized.

Mr. BARTLETT. It would seem to me if we have any witness here, including the Secretary of HUD, who disagrees with a proposed legislative solution, I would hope that he would tell us that he disagrees with the legislative solution and tell us why. That is why we have witnesses here.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Certainly.

Mr. BARTLETT. If that is what the Secretary did, then I think that would be the kind of candor in testimony we would be looking for.

I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK. I thank the gentleman from Texas. I appreciate his comments.

Let me say that I mentioned the subpoena and the chairman suggested otherwise. Having made the chairman look moderate on this issue maybe I can even make a similar transformation with some of the officials at HUD.

I would agree that obviously it would be preferable to do it in a more agreeable way. I am glad the gentleman from Texas emphasized the point I was trying to make that there may be differences between defending or attacking the report itself, and moving on to the public policy. I would hope we would get some bipartisan agreement that we are going to discuss the public policy, not just with HUD, because I realize there has been some divided responsibilities, but also with Health and Human Services and FEMA. It seems appropriate to me that we ought to have them all here and ask what is our plan of action in dealing with the homeless.

Even though we have limited resources, we can still work together without there being any recriminations about the report. All three agencies should come and that would be agreeable to me.

Mr. BARTLETT. I thank the gentleman for his comments.

If, on the one hand, we called a public hearing to deal with public policy and proposed solutions that the representatives—I haven't talked with either HUD or HHS or FEMA or other agencies—I would think on the hearing to discuss public policies those agencies I assume would be willing to come without a subpoena and therefore make a subpoena unnecessary.

On the other hand, if we want to continue to have hearings to discuss methodology of several reports, I think subpoenas on that subject would be rather intensively resisted by many members of this subcommittee, including myself.

Let me ask my question under my time. I would ask unanimous consent, since we are discussing the methodology of the HUD report and other reports, I would ask unanimous consent to put into the record a letter from Westat signed by Stephen Dietz, the vice president of Westat, to Jack Anderson, replying to his column and his attachments. I think it would useful for the record.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Without objection, so ordered.

[The letter of Stephen Dietz to Jack Anderson with attachments follows:]

WESTAT
An Employee-Owned Research Corporation
1650 Research Blvd • Rockville MD 20850 • 301 251-1500

July 23, 1985

Mr. Jack Anderson
1401 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Anderson:

This is to let you know that the statements about Westat, Inc. contained in your column of July 15, 1985 in the Washington Post are inaccurate and misleading.

Some of the major inaccuracies are as follows:

1. Westat interviewers are not "coached" to "cook statistics." They are trained in survey methods and in the proper way to administer a survey questionnaire.
2. Ms. Bell worked as an interviewer on the project; she was not involved in data processing and analysis, and she has no way of knowing whether any reported numbers "weren't used." I have personally doubled-checked Ms. Bell's questionnaire; the reported numbers were used just as recorded, and there were no additional numbers in the margin.
3. The "statistical flaw" that you allege is totally without basis in fact. The survey of shelter operators collected estimates of the number of homeless in their metropolitan areas. The average estimate for each area was then extrapolated to the national total for metropolitan areas.

If we can provide further information, please contact us. A check with us before publishing this erroneous report would have avoided the misunderstandings that have occurred.

Sincerely,

Stephen K. Dietz

Stephen K. Dietz
Vice President

P.S. Also, for your information, the correct amount spent on our contract with HUD for this survey was $35,000 not $62,000.

WESTAT
An Employee-Owned Research Corporation

MEMORANDUM

TO: **Westat Area Heads** July 22, 1985

FROM: **Steve Dietz** SKD

SUBJECT: **SUMMARY OF FACTS ON WESTAT'S SURVEY OF SHELTERS FOR THE HOMELESS**

1. Introduction

This summary has been prepared to acquaint Westat Area Heads and key staff with the principal facts concerning a national survey of shelters for the homeless that Westat conducted in early 1984. This information is provided to help you respond to inquiries which may have resulted from various newspaper articles and TV discussions, especially the July 15 Jack Anderson/Dale VanAtta article which was loaded with errors and mistaken conclusions. This is a continuation of a controversy which began in 1984 when homeless advocate Mitch Snyder, of the Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV), criticized the HUD report because he believed HUD's estimated 350,000 homeless in the United States was too low compared to the informal estimates of 2 million he had been using. (Mitch Snyder has never provided any methodology to back up his estimates.) David Marker and I appeared before a Joint House Committee Hearing on May 24, 1984 to explain our methodology. The last section of this memorandum addresses the "controversy" about the estimated number of homeless in the nation.

Please feel free to share this information with your staff and clients where you consider it appropriate. If you have further questions, please contact me.

2. Contract Facts

- Contract amount: $43,771
- Actual amount Westat spent: $35,000
  (i.e., work was performed under budget)
- Schedule: Work was performed on schedule during January - April 1984
- Key Westat Staff:

  Steve Dietz - Project Officer
  David Marker - Senior Statistician
  Helena Light - Survey Director
  Brenda Simpson - Telephone Supervisor

3. Westat vs.HUD Roles

Most press reports have blurred the respective roles of Westat and HUD, although they were quite distinct.

A. Westat's Role

- Drew a sample and conducted a telephone survey of 184 shelter operators in 60 metropolitan areas throughout the U.S.
- Provided HUD with a data tape and statistical tabulations correctly weighted up to all metropolitan areas in the U.S.
- Wrote a report to HUD that summarized the statistical findings of the shelter survey.

B. HUD's ROLE

HUD originally provided the sample frame of shelters in the 60 metropolitan areas and later analyzed the results of Westat's shelter survey. HUD also conducted its own data collection and analysis including:

(1) A survey of 500 social service agencies by HUD staff in the same 60 metropolitan areas;

(2) A review of past newspaper articles on homeless;

(3) Review of local studies in 30 metropolitan areas;

(4) Site visits to 10 metropolitan areas; and

(5) Discussion with national organizations (e.g., United Way, National Coalition for the Homeless, etc.).

HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research then produced its report: "A Report to the Secretary on the Homeless and Emergency Shelters", May 1984.

Although Westat had no role in writing or reviewing the HUD report, the HUD project officer made numerous calls to Westat to insure both that the Westat shelter survey statistics were properly understood by HUD and that HUD correctly represented highlights of the shelter survey results in their report.

4. Westat's Survey of Shelter Operators

A. Scope, Size and Response Rates

Westat conducted a nationally representative telephone survey of shelters in metropolitan areas and achieved a 97 percent response rate, with 184 completed interviews.

B. Main Topics

All but one of the questions in the survey dealt with shelter characteristics and services, and with the needs and conditions of the homeless using the shelter. Respondents frequently referred to their records, and were generally quite familiar with the issues discussed.

C. Estimated Number of Homeless in Metropolitan Area

The last question in the shelter survey asked shelter operators to estimate the number of homeless in their metropolitan area. Not all shelter operators felt they could make such an estimate, although more than 70 percent did provide an estimate. In Westat's report to HUD, we emphasized that this one question is probably subject to more error than other data from the survey (since other questions were facts about a single shelter). Westat used the average (mean) estimate for each metropolitan area where multiple shelters had been surveyed from a single metropolitan area, and then weighted the mean estimate for each metropolitan area up to the U.S. total for metropolitan areas. Westat estimated a total of 309,000 homeless* in metropolitan areas, which HUD extrapolated to 353,000 homeless in the U.S. by adding in HUD's estimate for rural homeless.

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* This is the number of homeless on a single night in February 1984; this should not be confused with the number of persons who experience homelessness at one time or another during the year. This latter number should be a considerably larger number due to many people entering or leaving homeless status during the year.

5. HUD's Estimate of Homeless

HUD's report (page 19) considers four approaches to estimating the number of homeless, resulting in various estimates as shown below.

SUMMARY EXHIBIT*

Summary of Four Approaches to Estimating Number of Homeless Persons Nationwide

Approach 1:	Extrapolation from Highest Published Estimates	586,000
Approach 2:	Extrapolation from Estimates in 60 Metropolitan Areas Obtained in 500+ Local Interviews	254,000
Approach 3:	Extrapolation of Estimates from National Sample of 125 Shelter Operators	353,000
Approach 4:	Shelter Population and Local Area Street Count	192,000
	Shelter Population and 1980 Census Street Count	267,000

Most Reliable Range: 250,000 - 350,000

HUD's assessment was that the Westat shelter survey and the HUD survey of 500 local agencies provided the most reliable estimates (i.e., about 250,000 to 350,000).

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* Copied from the 1984 HUD Report

6. Estimation of Error in the Projected Number of Homeless

As the concern grew about the reliability of estimates, Marker and Dietz reanalyzed the shelter survey data in order to get some sense of how consistent (or inconsistent) different estimates were from different shelter operations in the same metropolitan area. We found that estimates almost always tended to cluster together for any given area and that even if, as an extreme, we substituted the maximum estimate instead of the mean estimate for each area, the number of homeless estimated would only increase from 350,000 to about 550,000 (nowhere near the earlier 2 million rough estimates often cited by advocacy groups). These findings were reported to HUD in a July memo from Dietz and Marker, along with more detail including a full histogram of the distribution of area estimates by shelter operators.

7. Some Comments on the "Controversy" About Number of Homeless

There has been more heat than light as this politically-loaded controversy rages on. HUD's 250,000 to 350,000 estimate is condemned by Mitch Snyder of CCNV, who maintains that his 2 million or more estimate is the right one (even if it lacks methodological backup). The following points will not resolve this controversy, but may help remove some of the confusion and false notions.

A. Homeless Counts at a Point in Time vs. Over a Year

Westat and HUD estimates were for a single night in February, 1984 -- not "at one time or another during the year", which is the terminology that often has been used in connection with the 2 million estimate. The annual count can be expected to be much higher than the count on a single day (as in unemployment and similar social statistics).

B. An Ex-Westat Interviewer is Alleged to Have Found Much Higher Figures

An ex-Westat interviewer has claimed, in discussions with reporters, to remember one respondent who reported 300,000 homeless in the Gulf Coast area after hurricane Alicia. But, the facts of the matter are:

(1) No such number appears in her questionnaire; the number she recorded is much smaller and similar to reports from other shelters in the area; and

(2) In a check with the National Red Cross, Robert Vessey, Director of Disaster Services, said that 22,650 people were given shelter during Hurricane Alicia (including those evacuating for safety sake, although their homes were not destroyed). Even among those whose homes were destroyed by Hurricane Alicia, many would not be "homeless" if they moved in with relatives or into rental housing. Furthermore, the storm occurred in August 1983, and our survey was conducted in early 1984 when much of the storm damage could have been repaired.

In summary, for many different reasons, the 300,000 number is neither conceptually sound nor consistent with other reports, nor was it recorded in the questionnaire.

C. Confidentiality of Shelter Data

As is normal survey research practice, respondents were told that their answers to questions would be treated as confidential and would not be released with the identity of individual respondents or shelters. Westat has contacted the interviewer referred to in the previous paragraph and she said that she is aware of, and is complying with, her confidentiality pledge made to shelter operators.

D. It has been charged that HUD officials coached Westat interviewers on how to phrase questions and that interviewers were not allowed to explain or define what was meant by "city" or " metropolitan area" (Jack Anderson, Washington Post, July 15, 1985). Westat has responded to this article in a letter to Jack Anderson in an attempt to correct the mistaken report. The fact is, Westat's shelter survey was conducted using survey procedures that conform to standards used by responsible statistical organizations. This included training interviewers in exactly how questions were to be asked, and making sure questions were repeated if not understood. Since it is our normal practice to invite clients to training, a HUD representative was present, primarily as an observer and to answer questions that might arise. One of the few HUD inputs during the training was to emphasize that the estimated number of homeless was to be asked for the whole metropolitan area, not just the central city. Indeed, some of the sampled shelters were in the counties surrounding the central city.

E. Use of Metropolitan Areas

Some have charged that data was gathered only for central cities and then projected to all metropolitan areas of the U.S. This charge is false. Data were gathered from a probability sample of shelters in 60 metropolitan areas, including some non-central city shelters, and correctly weighted up to estimate the national total of homeless for metropolitan areas.

Some have further charged that the use of RMAs (Rand McNally Metropolitan Areas) instead of SMSAs led to confusion on behalf of shelter operators. The differences that exist between SMSAs and RMAs are generally quite small and, since they involve the most outlying suburban areas, would have only trivial effects on the estimated number of homeless. The Westat questionnaire only referred to the "metropolitan area." The high level of consistency among shelter operators (see point 6) indicates that the wording of the question did not produce a significant problem for respondents.

SD:ab

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WASHINGTON POST

JACK ANDERSON and DALE VAN ATTA

HUD Cooked Statistics on Homeless

When the Reagan administration announced last year that there were at most 350,000 homeless persons in the United States, the figure was greeted with widespread skepticism. Earlier estimates had put the number of homeless as high as 3 million.

Shelter operators denounced the administration's figure as misleading—a political statistic designed to justify cuts in federal funds for programs to aid the homeless. The Department of Housing and Urban Development, which commissioned the survey and came up with the disputed figure, insists that its estimate is accurate.

The survey was described by one congressional aide as "a contrived effort to demonstrate that there aren't as many homeless as everyone thinks."

Just how contrived the effort was is made clear by Sharon Bell, a former employe of the private research firm that was paid $62,000 to conduct the telephone survey. The cost of the report, however, was $138,000. Here's what she told our reporter Mark Woolley:

She and other employes of Westat Inc. of Rockville, Md., called shelter operators in cities across the country. The interviewers asked how many persons stayed in the shelter on an average winter night, and then asked shelter operators to estimate how many homeless there were in their city or metropolitan area.

"We were coached by HUD officials on how to phrase our questions," Bell said. "We were never allowed to explain or define what we meant by city or metropolitan area. If questioned by the shelter operator, we were only allowed to repeat our standard question." In fact, Bell said, "The shelter operators were only told that we were collecting information about shelters; they were never told we were counting heads."

She also charged that HUD officials were selective in the figures they put in their report. Some cities whose estimates of the homeless were unpalatably high were simply left out, she said.

"I remember calling Galveston [Tex.] and the numbers they gave me didn't fit HUD's report, so they weren't used," Bell said. She said the interviewers were told to jot down in the margin of the survey form any pertinent numbers provided by the shelter operators, but that these figures were never used.

The principal flaw in the HUD survey was a statistical error—a deliberate error, critics charge. The survey collected estimates of the homeless in 60 central cities, with a total population of 30 million. But the figures for the core cities were applied to "metropolitan areas" having a total population of almost 90 million.

In Hartford, Conn., for example, HUD got estimates on the number of homeless in the city alone (population 136,000) and applied it to the entire metropolitan area (population 1,055,000). This method was used in all 60 cities, and the deceptive results were then extrapolated to give a nationwide figure of 250,000 to 350,000.

Subcommittees headed by Reps. Ted Weiss (D-N.Y.) and Henry B. Gonzalez (D-Tex.) are looking into the methods used in HUD's survey. Weiss has asked HUD for all pertinent records, and has set today as a deadline for producing them.

BROOM HILDA RUSSELL MYERS

Mr. **Bartlett**. Now that we have agreed not to argue numbers and methodology, in reading your written testimony and listening to your oral testimony, it is my general understanding that that was the sole content of your testimony and your preparation here, Dr. Ericksen, and Dr. Appelbaum, is to, in fact, dispute the HUD methodology and therefore the HUD conclusion.

I just want to make sure I didn't miss anything. Was your testimony then disputing the HUD numbers or estimates as far as numbers of homeless only, or did you dispute some of their other conclusions on what they do and how to deal with the problem? Do you have any opinions about some of their other conclusions leaving aside the numbers?

Mr. **Appelbaum**. My testimony was limited to how they arrived at their numbers and specifically the national estimate of homelessness, which I believe, for the reasons I stated, significantly underestimates the number of homeless nationally.

Mr. **Bartlett**. Dr. Ericksen?

Mr. **Ericksen**. My comments are essentially the same. The firm conclusion I wanted to draw was we still don't know the number of homeless people, but it is most likely somewhat greater than 250,000 to 350,000.

Mr. **Bartlett**. Thank you.

I wonder, just for the purposes of the record, are the two of you representing yourselves or do you have a client or do you anticipate someone paying for the study? It was estimated there is even a dispute as to how much Westat was paid for their study—between $65,000 and $32,000. I am not sure why there is a dispute but are your studies in the paid-for client category or is it an academic exercise for you, or somewhere in between?

Mr. **Appelbaum**. I hope it is not just an academic exercise, but no, I did this on my own account.

Mr. **Bartlett**. Dr. Ericksen?

Mr. **Ericksen**. Yes.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. Would you yield to me?

Mr. **Bartlett**. Be happy to.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. These two witnesses were invited by the subcommittee staff, based on the fact they are nationally and internationally established as experts, not only statistical but sociological experts in this particular area. That is the reason.

Mr. **Bartlett**. OK.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. I don't think they have had prior contracts or anything. In fact, I am sure they haven't.

Mr. **Bartlett**. Now, let me follow up on the methodology. It seems to me that, as I try to read the methodology that you have described and the methodology in the HUD report, perhaps the essential difference—and tell me if this is correct—perhaps the essential difference is that HUD appears to take a snapshot or a point-in-time estimate, and the other estimates tend to take an annual estimate. Is that a difference between your estimates and HUD's estimates, or is that a difference at all, and do you think we ought to do a point-in-time or an annual total?

Mr. **Appelbaum**. No. My remarks really address HUD's point-in-time estimates, which I accept as a reasonable approach. I don't address that, but, given their objective of obtaining a reliable point-in-time figure, for all the reasons I outlined, I feel that they simply didn't do the job at all.

Mr. Bartlett. You accept a point-in-time methodology and think theirs is inaccurate?

Mr. Appelbaum. Well, that is what my testimony focused on. Point-in-time methodology does give you just that. It gives you a point-in-time snapshot of the homeless. It doesn't provide you with information that a year-long estimate would.

Mr. Bartlett. Dr. Ericksen?

Mr. Ericksen. I was addressing the question, Did HUD come up with a good point-in-time estimate? It is a separate question to ask should they have calculated a point-in-time or year-long estimate. I have not addressed that.

Mr. Bartlett. As internationally known experts, from your own estimates, what would your estimates be on a point-in-time basis of the number of homeless in America? Or, let's take it by city—New York City, Los Angeles. The L.A. Times, in the material that was put into the record, concluded that if we accept the high estimate of 2 million homeless in the country at a point in time altogether, we would have to accept using that methodology of 146,000 any single night in New York City alone, or 200,000, and the chairman quoted 200,000 in Houston. Do you think there are 146,000 homeless on any given night in New York City? Do you think there are 200,000 homeless on any given night in Houston?

Mr. Ericksen. I would like to respond to two separate questions. First, you asked me how many homeless people I think are in the United States. That touches a very important issue, I think, in statistics. That is, that when you present an estimate it is a very important thing statistically to indicate how much uncertainty you have with that estimate. I think that the most serious thing wrong with the HUD report is that they substantially underestimated the uncertainty with which they produced that estimate. They make it seem like it is somewhere within a range of 100,000.

Based on what I have read, I would say that there are somewhere between 200,000 and 2 million homeless people in the United States and I think that when people sit down and formulate policy on homelessness, they have to say to themselves we have a ball park figure because we have such uncertainty about the number.

Mr. Bartlett. Dr. Ericksen is your testimony that you believe there are somewhere between 200,000 and 2,000,000 homeless people in the United States?

Mr. Ericksen. That is right.

That is sort of where we started the hearing, isn't it?

Yes. The point is——

Mr. Bartlett. That is the spread between the two estimates.

Mr. Ericksen. The point is the HUD researchers asked certain local people these questions and really hasn't advanced the ball. I think that is an important thing to say.

Now, as far as New York City is concerned, you asked—was it 146,000 in New York City you asked?

Mr. Bartlett. According to the L.A. Times, they extrapolated back from the 2 million nationally and concluded there would have to be 147,000 in New York City.

Mr. Ericksen. I don't know how they got that number, but I will tell you that I have read a report on New York City which was prepared by that city's human resources administration. It is quite a comprehensive report, gives information on the number of shelter beds, the volume of usage and many, many other characteristics, and on page 9 of that report they state, having done all of that research. There is no reliable estimate of homelessness in New York City. So we just don't know.

Mr. Bartlett. Do you have an estimate, Dr. Appelbaum?

Ms. Oakar. Would you yield?

I just wanted to give you an example of what I consider part of the problem in terms of inaccuracies. Cleveland is cited, for example, in the report. They cite the Federation and Community Planning, which is a very credible umbrella agency in Cleveland. When we talked to them—then they cite in Cleveland there is between 200 and 2,000 homeless people, and they cite this federation as the reference. The problem is that when you talk to the federation, they say well, no, there is at least 5,000. So citing credible agencies and then either misrepresenting whatever data they gave them is a problem.

So I just feel that we ought to acknowledge that there is a comprehensive homeless problem in this country and get on with it, and do something about it. But for HUD not to acknowledge it and then to always oppose legislation that relates to the homeless is just terrible.

Chairman Gonzalez. If the gentlelady will yield to me.

Ms. Oakar. My friend from Texas' time, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Gonzalez. If you will yield to me.

Mr. Bartlett. Be happy to.

Chairman Gonzalez. I will recognize the gentlelady in a moment, but since the gentleman from Texas did yield, we will give him one more question at this time.

Mr. Bartlett. Mr. Chairman, I am sure someone on this committee will ask, the next question I was going to ask, but I will leave it to the other members as to what the witnesses would recommend—Dr. Appelbaum may want to answer the first question, which is does he have a number of the number of estimates of the number of homeless in any given city—New York, Los Angeles?

Mr. Appelbaum. I don't have an estimate and I don't think there has been a study done yet which estimates adequately the number of homeless. Not only for the reasons that I indicated, but also because most homeless are invisible. The Boston study, for example, which is cited by four out of five sources, for the city of Boston, went into great detail on a specific night in October to count the homeless in the city of Boston, and they went to many street corners and subways and so forth, but even they acknowledged that there were many people in abandoned buildings, in cars and side streets that they didn't cover, that they simply couldn't detect, including, of course, people who are forced to spend the night on a neighbor's floor, a night with a relative because they have no place to go.

If it was determined that if the problem of homelessness were critical to our national defense we would probably count every homeless person here. Since that is not the case—I don't think it is feasible to do that and I agree, I think we should get on with dealing with the problem.

Mr. Bartlett. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Gonzalez. I will say for the record, the gentleman referred obviously to the statement I had made of 200,000 homeless in Houston. I didn't say 200,000 homeless. I said an estimate given to us by a witness was there were up to that amount in aliens and that 20,000 was a figure they gave for homeless and they were wondering what percentage of the 20,000 were alien individuals living in Houston at the time.

But I will say this also, if the gentlelady will allow me a minute, this is a floating situation. It is not a stabilized situation at any point. I do think you have a minimum and that is my own estimate, but I am not going to hazard it. I am not a statistical expert but I will say this, that it is identical to the question of the alien presence, the so-called illegal aliens in the United States. Nobody knows how many there are and the reason is that every week you have fluctuations. For every three that might come at a given hour you have some that is going back, because there is a constant to and fro movement between Mexico and the United States in the case of those proceeding across the Mexican border.

It is the same thing with the homeless. There is no way that you can say when the family such as we had in my district, a family that had a home up until about 6 months before, and they had a home for many years. Suddenly, they were out because of a combination of things. Salvation Army couldn't take them, so they were found sleeping in a car—mother, father, and four children—underneath an underpass. Fortunately, we were able to get the Public Housing Authority to move and we found them emergency shelter, but there is no telling at what point you are going to have an exacerbation of that number pushed up.

I do feel that because of economic situations that are in themselves difficult to appraise, we will continue to see a larger number of homelessness that say wasn't the case 10 years ago. So, we do have a problem.

The gentlelady from Ohio.

Ms. Oakar. Mr. Chairman, I really don't have questions. I guess what I want to do is in a sense contradict what I said earlier about we ought to get on with it. The reason these statistics are important is—and this report is important in a negative sense unfortunately, is that their report—HUD's report—is a very, very negative report, and it does not acknowledge really and truly that there is a problem out there, and so whenever we produce legislation or put in our housing bill, as Mr. Vento has done—I have amended that, I added in terms of the deinstitutionalized, and everybody knows if you are a living human being in this country that there are all these people who not only don't have a place to live but they don't get the proper medication and so forth. This is a terrible reality for these people who have been deinstitutionalized.

But what HUD does then is use their report against us when we try to pass legislation. They use their fictitious data against us, and so that is why having this hearing is important. If we all agree, and my friend from Texas agrees, that there is a problem out there, and we can get people on the other side of the aisle to agree there is a real problem out there that we ought to be addressing, then we can look at solutions. But if you don't want to acknowledge there is a problem, and you want to use data that really is questionable, then we really have a problem out there.

The other point I would like to make, Mr. Chairman, is I really commend you for having this hearing because I think the homeless people are among the forgotten people. They don't have political constituency. Let's be honest about it. As a result, Congress is not into—and the President certainly is not—into anything about some of the most vulnerable people in our country.

I would like to acknowledge in your next panel—and unfortunately I won't be able to stay for the whole panel—that you do have someone from my area of Greater Cleveland, who has done some really fine research. I am familiar with the research they have done on mental health and I used some of those statistics when I was asking the chairman to accept my legislation, which he graciously did in the bill, the comprehensive housing bill.

I really want to thank you for having this hearing and I hope we can look for some solutions. We have got people on this committee; namely, my friend from Minnesota, and ourselves, Mr. Chairman, who have been real leaders in this area. We just wish we could get some cooperation from the administration. That is the name of the game.

Thank you.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. Thank you.

Mr. Vento.

Mr. **Vento**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

There has been a good deal said about the fact we ought to move forward and do some positive activity. I guess, as most of us did I think at one of the first hearings on this study that occurred in the Select Committee on Aging, on which I have the privilege to serve—that was my point I guess—if there are 200,000, what are we going to do about them, because I think the administration has not proposed solutions.

It is disturbing to learn now that the methodology that has been used is so badly flawed. It conjures up in my mind whether the whole issue was done in bad faith, and that there was cooked up figures and misinformation. Everyone says this didn't do anything, this didn't accomplish anything. I think that was your statement, Mr. Ericksen.

The fact is that before we knew that there was a range of maybe as high as 2 million people, the fact is this did something and I think it is important to recognize that. That is that it undercut and undermined the efforts at the national level and at the local level, and at the State level, to actually cope with this particular problem. So, it did worse than nothing. I would be satisfied if it had done nothing. The fact is that it set back the efforts to deal with this. So, the problem today I believe has been compounded by the type of effort here that a Federal resource is being poured into what I really would characterize as misinformation. It is worse than doing nothing because it set the issue back and pushed us in the wrong direction.

In looking at the study, all, of course, I guess have had some experience in terms of polling. We wouldn't be here unless we did.

We are in a sense somewhat familiar with polling and the social science methodology that needs to be utilized in order to give an objective response with regards to this.

For instance, Mr. Appelbaum, I read some of the statements that you made, perhaps not all of it, and I don't have time to go through a critique of whether the right social science methods were used with regards to this, but insofar as I can see, it is pretty obvious that they were not. Was there any, for instance, effort here to deal with bias or detractors that might have occurred with regard to the responses from individuals that were providing, who were questioned, Mr. Appelbaum?

Mr. APPELBAUM. At the time, what was done was to combine different estimates by allocating weights. They never tell us why their estimates—shelter operators, for example, were assigned a high weight because their knowledge was supposed to be most reliable.

As Professor Ericksen indicated a shelter operator has a very specific knowledge of his or her particular shelter in that area, and certainly not knowledge in terms of the entire metropolitan area.

Also, HUD, nowhere provides us with any kind of parameters by which you might compare the cities they sampled with the national selection of cities. We don't know how representative their selections were, in effect. They don't provide us with the data that would enable us to make that determination.

Mr. VENTO. To get back to my question, which is a very specific one, is there any way to eliminate answers that may have been biased either in terms of expanding the numbers, of minimizing the numbers? If you ask a city official how many people he has in the district or in an area that are homeless, that may not be the best thing to have a large answer.

Mr. APPELBAUM. In fact, HUD did just that. These estimates which they regarded as extremely out of line with what the interviewer believed to be the case, because of their sources, they simply didn't include them in the total. That is why in——

Mr. VENTO. I understand. That sort of sounds like sort of a subjective judgment. If they thought they were too high they just disallowed them. If they thought they were too low, I don't know what they did. That doesn't sound to me like a very definitive polling tool on which to disallow or allow various answers.

That is what I am asking. I understand they did that, but the question I am asking is what is the basis on which they did that? I mean, is that a very standard procedure with regard to polling and with regard to social science activities?

Mr. APPELBAUM. All I can say is I wouldn't want to bet anyone's reelection on the sampling that HUD used to get its results. They did not go out and draw a circle around an area and say we are going to systematically poll this area. Rather, they went to various people who had information, much of which was off the top of their head.

Mr. VENTO. Is there any model that you know that this sort of study followed on a national basis to take statistics and to take opinions from? You are a sociologist. You have obviously done a certain amount of social science sampling with regard to information to try to get attitudes. We know it is a different process to get attitudes and opinions and views and to make these different number counts. Does this follow some well-known model?

We are giving HUD millions of dollars every year to do studies. I guess I have never really thought about it. We have always assumed when it came to social science and scientific sampling of information that there was one way to do it, the right way. Just you have a valid model that you utilize and that we don't end up—we can argue over what policy ought to be and we clearly do that in this committee on a regular basis, but the thing is that there shouldn't be any argument over the methodology or the method that is utilized. In other words, it has to be a valid method.

Is there any reason they couldn't do it that way? Didn't they do it that way? Is this a common model that is used? If you had a Ph.D. student, would you let him use this method?

Mr. APPELBAUM. I don't know that I want to answer that question. HUD chose to do it this way. They did not use a survey sample of homeless people. They did a sample of "experts" instead—expert in quotes—on homelessness. What they used I guess, you would call a snowball technique, which is to say they went into an area, they made a list of people who are involved in the homeless issue. They then asked those people how many homeless there are. They asked them to suggest other people and went out and asked other people, based on the response that they got.

But the problem with that method, of course, is I think there are only three cities cited in the HUD study that actually did hard counts of the homeless. The rest is subjective opinion, and I don't think it matters if it is a shelter operator or a member of the Coalition on the Homeless, it is just a guess. It may be a somewhat more informed guess than my guess, but it is still a guess because of the monumental problems.

There are a few studies which looked at it in detail, the Boston study done by I think the Boston Emergency Shelter Commission. There was one study where they actually went out and did a count.

Mr. VENTO. Did they accept that into their study?

Mr. APPELBAUM. That is interesting. Let me just make a comment on that. That study, by the Emergency Shelter Commission, was done on the night of October 27, 1983. They sent a bunch of people out to count the homeless. They found there were 925 in shelters, 652 in detoxification and mental health centers, and 1,190 in the city, at least within the city of Boston. The study is very specifically on the city of Boston, not on the metropolitan area.

When you add to that the Emergency Shelter Commission came up with 2,767, approximately 2,800 homeless in the city of Boston on that night. HUD's estimates for the Boston metropolitan area are 3,100 to 3,300. That is about 400 to 600 more than this study for the city of Boston.

Mr. VENTO. The total population for the city of Boston——

Mr. APPELBAUM. The city of Boston has 15 percent of the metropolitan area population and yet according to HUD it has 90 percent of the homeless, which I find quite doubtful on the surface.

Mr. VENTO. They rejected that. If you only took the cities as an example in the survey and extrapolated that out as being the average for these metropolitan areas, what would the figure have been? They, apparently, just went to where there were locations where they were formerly serving these, and where they weren't, they didn't count. Yet, it looks like those being served within a city only comprise one-third of the homeless.

Mr. APPELBAUM. We don't know. HUD makes the assumption that there are no homeless in the suburbs, but the city of Boston, with its 15 percent of the population, the remaining 85 percent are by no means suburban, that includes a large number of cities in their own right. And even so, I think HUD's assumption that there are no homeless in the suburbs is also false. I don't want to correct that by multiplying by some factor because I think that would be irresponsible on my part. We really don't know.

Mr. VENTO. You will never get a job working for HUD, I can tell you that.

Mr. APPELBAUM. Not in this administration.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Ericksen, did you have a comment?

Mr. ERICKSEN. I am afraid that for the sociology of homelessness, the amount of subjective judgment, is going to be rather large and the amount of objective judgment rather small. In polling studies, we try to give people more likely to vote a heavier weight and the people who are less likely to vote a lower weight when trying to predict who is going to win the election. That was a critical part of the HUD methodology.

In the sense of dealing with these weights, my analysis is incomplete because I need to know how they decided which interviews got which weight. In Cleveland, there were four estimates. One was 200, one was 400, one was 650, and one was 2,000.

In the city of Cleveland, according to a report I read, there are 367 beds for homeless individuals and 22 spaces for families. So, if you assume there are 2 people in every family, you've got over 400.

In the questionnaire of the person that said 2,000 is written the words "no basis." The other three numbers, 200, 400, and 650, if you average them, you get approximately 420 which is in the reliable range given in the HUD report. So, it appears that the questionnaire which has an estimate of 2,000 was given zero weight.

I need to know the criterion for giving that high estimate no weight. In that sense, I have to say that both of our analyses are incomplete.

Mr. VENTO. I understand that, but I am concerned you are not putting this out as a public report and holding it up as the facts on which we have to make policy decisions. If you can't give a complete answer, I appreciate the hesitancy to give that type answer today, but misinformation is worse than no information. In other words, by virtue of this, I think that we would all like to have a handy formula we could refer to that said if you have 500 beds you could assume that that represents two-thirds of the number of homeless in a certain type of urban dense area and that suburban areas where there are no services tend to have a lower incidence of homelessness.

I can go through a fly-by-the-seat-of-pants analysis and we could extrapolate it out and come up with a conclusion. Unfortunately, that doesn't exist.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Would the gentleman yield?

I think the witnesses have been very eloquent in pointing out the fact that in trying to derive this equation there are so many variables that you can't be precise at any one given moment. If you say, well, you have *x* number of beds for the homeless, can you extrapolate some kind of conclusion as to the overall estimate of total homelessness, but that doesn't bring in the question of those that are in the jail at that particular moment who may be on the street the next day, the next night.

So, that I think here what we have had this morning is about top—it is tops. We are not going to get any better statistical analysis and therefore evaluations and the proper spectrum or range of those numbers than what we hear here this morning.

I think that if we say, well, can we get sort of a definitive, conclusive, exact, precise, well, I think we are asking too much.

Mr. **Vento**. Reclaiming my time, I wasn't asking that. You know the whole thing is—this is about, and it doesn't involve the witnesses here, but it is this whole conclusion with regard to homelessness that somehow that we have got to get a count of these people. We have to have a count. In other words, we can't just put the service out and meet the needs with regard to National Government. That is what this is all about. If you look at the policy question, what they are saying is that if we provide services fundamentally, that we will create a problem, that we will in fact, there will be someone that is going to take advantage of this particular benefit of this particular shelter and therefore we can't just go out and meet the needs.

We have to define it, dissect it, just in terms of meeting the needs because we know they are there. We are getting it from the communities, from the nonprofit groups that are overstrapped in terms of meeting the need, by defining it we are going to somehow limit it. We are caught up in figures and have forgotten about the people impacted.

We want to know that there is a problem, we ought to try to meet the need. Trying to count it, define it, trying to deal with it in that way really begs the question of whether we are going to do anything about it.

This is a basis on which to fight initiatives in Congress and in other corners that were being made unfortunately and unfortunately to some extent it has been successful. I hope we can throw this study on the ash heap of history and move ahead and try and solve the problem.

I think we ought to keep this in mind when HUD asks for research money and we find that they have used the money in this manner because I think it does not speak well for the type of programs being accomplished there. I hope that it is misrepresentative of the type and nature of this that they are used not for political purposes, not to fulfill prophecies on the part of HUD, but for legitimate research purposes, because we have plenty of problems with regard to peoples' needs with regard to housing and we don't need to throw it away providing political cover and a whitewash on serious problems that grip this Nation.

If you don't want to spend the money, fine, argue that, but don't use the scarce resources we have on misinformation that does a disservice to the issue and to the Congress in terms of trying to deal with these policy issues, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. I agree.

We have to run along. We have another panel, and I will recognize Mr. Kanjorski at this moment. You have no questions? Do you have any statement you would like to make?

I know you are very much concerned with problems in your own area in Pennsylvania, so we will recognize you for that purpose if you wish.

Mr. **Kanjorski**. Thank you very much.

I think I tend to agree with Mr. Vento's comments that sometimes the administration and particularly this department utilizes resources to support their proposition, their argument, and perhaps miss the overall general policy considerations of the Congress, and I would join in that observation at least with that comment.

I will yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. Thank you very much, Mr. Kanjorski.

I would ask unanimous consent not only for myself but absent members of the subcommittee who will have questions in writing to submit to the two witnesses, and again, thank you very much for your very wonderful cooperation and for allowing us the benefit of your talents.

Thank you very much.

Our next panel consists of Ms. Sharon Bell of Rockville, MD, former employee of Westat, Inc.; Ms. Marian Chambers, executive director, Jacksonville Community Council, Jacksonville, FL; and Dr. Harvey Hilbert, executive director, Rainbeau Associates, Counseling and Research Centers, South Euclid, OH.

I would like to say for Dr. Hilbert's information that our distinguished colleague was here earlier and referred to the fact that she anticipated your presence but she does have a conflict. She is chairperson of another subcommittee and had to leave. If there is no time restrictions or problems with any of the panelists, would there be any objection to recognizing Ms. Bell first and then proceeding counterclockwise?

Ms. Bell, thank you very much for joining us.

STATEMENT OF SHARON BELL, ROCKVILLE, MD, FORMER EMPLOYEE OF WESTAT, INC.

Ms. **Bell**. Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for providing me the opportunity to appear before you to express my concerns and thoughts on the very important matter of shelters for the homeless.

My background is as follows: I am a single parent with two college-aged sons. I received an associate in arts degree at Roxbury Community College, Boston, MA, in 1977. In June 1980, I received the bachelor of arts degree, cum laude, from Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. In 1981, I was elected to Outstanding Young Women in America.

In addition, I have served on the board of directors of the Cambridge Council for Children, worked in the DES Daughter Identification Program, and was a volunteer for the Community Crisis Center in Bethesda.

I am presently employed as bookkeeper for a Federal sector labor union. From approximately July 1983 to April 1984, I was employed as a telephone interviewer for Westat, Inc., and worked on several projects, including the survey of shelters for the homeless.

As interviewers, we were trained by Westat and HUD personnel to administer a questionnaire to managers of shelters in approximately 60 cities across the United States. Once the actual interviewing began, problems with the wording of the questions arose.

As one example, questions 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9 refer to months of highest/lowest occupancy rates. In several instances, respondents stated that their highest occupancy months were during the extremely warm months of the year, rather than in January, which is the month on which the questions appear to focus.

A second concern was voiced by respondents over the number of questions which focused on financial sources and usage, rather than on the numbers of people needing shelter.

Most respondents were extremely happy that this study was being conducted and had expressed hope that it would result in definitive measures to aid the homeless.

Their concern seemed to arise when they realized the questionnaire contained far more questions on funding and facility-specific usage than on actual homelessness counts. This problem was obvious when we asked question No. 22, a three-part question, asking about the general situation concerning the homeless in their metropolitan areas(s). Metropolitan area was not defined in the questionnaire. If the interviewer was asked by the respondent to define the area, the interviewer was instructed to quote: "The city as well as all the surrounding counties in the SMSA."

We were not to define any further. We were told that most of the respondents would be familiar with the term SMSA and, if they were not, that we must let them define the area they were discussing. This question brought a veritable flood of information which we, as interviewers, were instructed to copy—verbatim, if possible—onto the left margins of the questionnaire and to continue on extra sheets of paper and attach to the questionnaire.

The final question, No. 23, was on a tear sheet. It asked for the respondent's name and address, in order that HUD could send the respondents a copy of the final report. In more than one instance, the respondent was hesitant about identifying him/herself, even though anonymity had been promised.

Interviewers were instructed to copy this information, if given, onto the RIS, respondent information sheet. I personally had a problem with this as I could not see how confidentiality could be protected if such information was on the identifying RIS, nor could I see any reason for the duplication.

My personal concerns include all of the above, as well as three others.

First, in any experience I have had with administering questionnaires, the cardinal rule always seemed to be that one never changes/rewords the questionnaire once interviewing begins. There were several changes made in the homeless questionnaire, from simple rewording for clarification purposes—question 15g—to including vouchers in question 13.

Second, when the results of the study became public in various media reports, I was shocked at the final count of homeless that was reported. I had interviewed one shelter manager in Galveston, TX, who, alone had a very high estimate for homeless in his area. When I finally saw the study several months later, the city of Galveston had not even been included.

That particular gentleman had given extensive information as to why this estimate/count was so high, and I had attached 3 to 5 handwritten pages to that questionnaire.

An aside to this: Several interviewers had wondered how coding was to be done on such open-ended information, especially since this question seemed to get to the heart of counting/estimating numbers of homeless.

Finally, about 2 to 3 weeks after the study closed, HUD held a debriefing for those who had worked on the project. Interviewers were told that we could ask any questions we had of the HUD people and we would be given the results of the study. Several of us, myself included, came away from that debriefing shocked and upset.

If we asked a question, we were given a nonanswer. In some instances, we were all but told that what we had heard from respondents just did not exist. This attitude and treatment, combined with all of the foregoing, is what convinced me that something was seriously and morally wrong about this study. This is why I contacted Mr. Mitch Snyder after seeing his involvement with the homeless on local television news. This is why I felt it necessary to appear before you today.

Please be assured that I have no intention of breaking any confidentiality or breaching any confidences. I cannot provide names of individual respondents or specific shelters. My intent is to express my sincere concern for the homeless and to share with you my experience and impressions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Sharon Bell follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SHARON BELL

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of this Subcommittee, thank you for providing me with the opportunity to appear before you to express my concerns and thoughts on the very important matter of shelters for the homeless.

My background is as follows. I am a single parent with two college-aged sons. I received an Associate in Arts degree at Roxbury Community College, Boston, Massachusetts, in 1977. In June, 1980, I received the Bachelor of Arts degree, cum laude, from Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. In 1981, I was elected to Outstanding Young Women in America. In addition, I have served on the Board of Directors of the Cambridge Council for Children, worked in the D.E.S. Daughter Identification Program, and was a volunteer for the Community Crisis Center in Bethesda. I am presently employed as bookkeeper for a federal-sector labor union. From approximately July of 1983 to April, 1984, I was employed as a telephone interviewer for Westat, Inc., and worked on several projects, including the Survey of Shelters for the Homeless.

As interviewers, we were trained by Westat and HUD personnel to administer a questionnaire to managers of shelters in approximately sixty cities across the United States. Once the actual interviewing began, problems with the wording of the questions arose. As one example, questions 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 refer to months of highest/lowest occupancy rates. In several instances, respondents stated that their highest occupancy months were during the extremely warm months of the year, rather than in January (which is the month on which the questions appear to focus). A second concern was voiced by respondents over the number of questions which focused on financial sources and usage, rather than on the numbers of people needing shelter. (Most respondents were extremely happy that this study was being conducted and had expressed hope that it would result in definitive measures to aid the homeless.) Their concern seemed to arise when they realized the questionnaire contained far more questions on funding and facility-specific usage than on actual homelessness (counts). This problem was obvious when we asked question #22, a three-part question, asking about the "general situation concerning the homeless" in their "metropolitan area(s)". Metropolitan area was not defined in the questionnaire. If the interviewer was asked by the respondent to define the area, the interviewer was instructed to quote: "The city as well as all the surrounding counties in the SMSA". We were not to define any further; we were told that most of the respondents would be familiar with the term SMSA and, if they were not, that we must let them define the area they were discussing. This question brought a veritable flood of information which we, as interviewers, were instructed to copy (verbatim, if possible) onto the left margins of the questionnaire and to continue on extra sheets of paper and attach to the questionnaire.

The final question, #23, was on a "tear sheet". It asked for the respondent's name and address, in order that HUD could send the respondents a copy of the final report. In more than one instance, the respondent was hesitant about identifying him/herself, even though anonymity had been promised. Interviewers were instructed to copy this information, if given, onto the RIS (Respondent Information Sheet). I personally had a problem with this as I could not see how confidentiality could be protected if such information was on the identifying RIS, nor could I see any reason for the duplication.

My personal concerns include all of the above, as well as three others. First, in any experience I have had with administering questionnaires, the cardinal rule always seemed to be that one never changes/rewords the questionnaire once interviewing begins. There were several changes made in the Homeless Questionnaire, from simple rewording for clarification purposes (Q.15g) to including vouchers in Question 13.

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Please be assured that I have no intention of breaking any confidentiality or breaching any confidences; I cannot provide names of individual respondents or specific shelters. My intent is to express my sincere concern for the homeless and to share with you my experiences and impressions.

Thank you.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. Thank you very much for your testimony. I thank you for being with us this morning. I know it wouldn't be easy under any circumstances and we are grateful to you.

Ms. Chambers.

STATEMENT OF MARIAN CHAMBERS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JACKSONVILLE COMMUNITY COUNCIL, JACKSONVILLE, FL

Ms. **Chambers**. Good morning.

I also have a short statement and then I think probably it would be a better use of your time to focus on the concerns that you have.

I represent the Jacksonville Community Council from Jacksonville, FL. That is a private nonprofit citizens organization which seeks to improve the quality of life in Jacksonville, FL, through active citizen participation in the public affairs of the community.

Each year JCCI identifies several major community issues and researches these urban problems via diverse citizens committees. The diversity of these committees ensures the airing of opposing points of view and usually result in a balanced set of proposals for change. When the study is complete and has been accepted by our board of directors, the organization stands behind the proposals.

A second JCCI committee then works to bring the proposals to the attention of the public and to decisionmakers who can implement the recommendations.

In addition to this kind of community problem solving, JCCI works with the United Way of Jacksonville and with the major funders of human services in our area to improve the planning and coordination of human services.

Having completed its 10th year, JCCI now has an impressive record of credible studies resulting in many positive changes to the benefit of our community.

I as director have been with the organization for 9 of those 10 years. My background is also in sociology and I was on the faculty of the University of North Florida preceding my employment with the council.

Back in 1981, after the JCCI had made its program selection for the year, the Downtown Development Authority in our community came to us and asked us to do a study on what they called downtown derelicts and they assumed the role of implementing whatever we suggested in this study.

The Downtown Development Authority, as in many American communities, was working hard to revitalize what was a stagnating and declining downtown and they felt that the presence of these people might be a deterrent to this redevelopment and it might keep many people from going into the downtown area.

Their concern—I mention this because their concern really was not primarily homelessness—was downtown redevelopment, and they wanted to know what the nature of this population was, what their behavioral patterns were and how the needs of downtown development and the needs of this population could be meshed so they didn't conflict with each other.

The people that they had in mind were people who either by their behavior or appearance were classified as derelicts. A derelict, according to Webster, is an abandoned or neglected member of society or one not responsible or socially acceptable so some of these people were defined as derelicts because of their behavior, things like panhandling in the downtown area, walking along the streets, and talking to themselves perhaps or just being intoxicated and thereby frightening people or by their appearance and most of these people were obviously poorly groomed, smelly, and unattractive looking, so that was the kind of person that they were concerned with.

Again, I would assure you that not all of these people are necessarily homeless. Some of these people may have been people who have been deinstitutionalized from mental institutions and are now living near the Jacksonville downtown area in what is called group homes, but during the daytime they have no programs for them and they wander into the downtown area and sometimes their behavior frightens other people, although they are perfectly harmless, so I would not call those people homeless because they have a roof over their heads in the nighttime hours.

Others of the people here may not be included in someone else's definition of the homeless and I don't know how HUD defines them.

As a part of this study, we attempted to estimate to get some handle on the numbers that we were talking about here to try to put this in perspective and we found out, as all of the people before me have testified, that it is a very, very difficult thing to do.

I think I can add to what they said by the contacts that we had with the shelter providers in Jacksonville. In our community, most of the shelters are operated by private groups which do not receive public funds. I believe the Salvation Army may receive some city funds, but the others do not and the private groups are sponsored by churches and by and large their major goal is to convert people to Christianity and they do count that, the number of converts they have.

They can sometimes give you counts of the number of lodgings they have provided during a given year, but there again you have to be very careful to realize that the number of lodgings is not the number of persons, that the same person may be back 14 times and that same person may go to the other shelters in Jacksonville, so you cannot get good figures from these people even when they are trying and most of them do not consider themselves accountable to anyone except perhaps to their own church or church leadership, so the figures are very hard to come by and to think that the shelter operators have good figures, at least in our community, is not the case.

What we did in Jacksonville and what we said in our report was simply to do a little count of our own and we counted all the people who were in all the missions and shelters on the coldest January night of 1982 and then we added—that was a night when everybody who could got in from outside and we don't usually have that cold weather. Then we added to that people who were taken in by some cheap downtown hotels out of compassion for these people and we added to that the few people being held in our jail on that particular night because of intoxication and we added the few people who happened to be in our detoxification center that night who they considered to fall into the category of downtown derelicts.

We put those figures together and added on top of it a person to person count made by a downtown policeman a couple of years before on another night of people sleeping outdoors or in vacant buildings. You can see that that was not sound scientific methodology, but it was the best we could do to get a figure and came up to 300. The lower figure of 150 was due to the fact that we have a transient population in Jacksonville so we have a seasonal problem.

This time of year and in March we are deluged with transients on their way to south Florida to seek agricultural employment or on their way back in March. At those times of the year, our shelters are full; the rest of the year, not full.

This points out the problem you may have with a point-in-time count, but that is what we did and how we came up with our figure.

I was rather distressed to find today—I had not seen the HUD report—to see this chart and to see that a chart that we used in our report was taken by HUD and I believe apparently misused, and I might add that they did not call us, they did not contact us to find out where these numbers came from and I would have thought that they might have been curious about them.

Let me read to you what we said about them in our study.

> Estimates of the derelict population in other cities as related to the total population of those cities are seen below in the chart. These estimates, like the one for Jacksonville, are not based on a sound scientific methodology and their validity is open to some question. At best they can be considered broad indicators of the magnitude of the problem.

We recognized that these were really not good figures, but we also recognized that the Downtown Development Authority, like all American institutions, wants to know not only how are we doing, but how are we doing relative to somebody else and are we worse or better than other communities.

So we selected other communities which we had found had done something to address this problem, either through a study or a task force, some sort of research, and then we selected those that we thought were roughly comparable to our community, by that I mean we eliminated New York, Philadelphia, and the large Northern cities which have a different problem than we have in the South or the West.

When we got these figures, they came from different sources with different degrees of validity. For example, the New Orleans figure of 700 was supposedly done by four students who did a nose count in the late seventies and they came up with 700 which was considerably less than the 4,000 that they had expected.

All of these populations were essentially the downtown derelict or skid row populations. They were not the entire homeless community by any means.

In Orlando, the figure given us was a Census Bureau count and as I understand that that also includes people in jails and in institutions on that particular occasion.

So it is at best a motley assortment of counts and it really does not have much reliability to it.

We said that in our report and I would say it again and I think you also need to keep in mind that in 1981 the plight of the homeless was not a popular cause. It was not receiving much attention by the Federal Government, and most local agencies had not focused on it as strongly as they have now.

Even Doonesbury hadn't heard of it back in 1981, so there wasn't much data available and it was very hard to come by. It will be hard to come by because of the fluidity of the population. It is constantly changing, a lot of it is invisible.

When you count people, you do them either at home or at work and most of these people by definition don't have a home or work so it is a very difficult task and I sympathize with HUD having to take it on.

I was asked to make a brief comment about the state of homelessness in Jacksonville today and what I have learned from talking to service providers is that the problem is not increasing dramatically, I am happy to say. The population is changing and we are getting many more families as a unit, whereas the breadwinner used to come to Jacksonville first and locate a job and then send for the family. He is now coming with the entire family and that has presented problems because our major shelters are set up still for the traditional skid row population of white males and they do not have a way of accommodating families.

Most of them operate on a night-time basis only. They accept people at 5 or 6 in the afternoon and turn them out after breakfast at 6 in the morning. This makes it very difficult for women and children to have anything to do during the daytime hours except go to our public library.

I am happy to say that two of our shelters have addressed this problem and are now constructing new shelters to accommodate families.

I thank you for the opportunity to be here today and would be happy to respond to any questions you might have.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of the Jacksonville Community Council, Inc., presented by Marian Chambers, and the report referred to follow:]

Jacksonville Community Council Inc.
1001 Kings Ave., Suite 201
Jacksonville, Florida 32207
Telephone (904) 396-3052

STATEMENT TO HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DECEMBER 4, 1985

The Jacksonville Community Council, Inc. is a private, not-for-profit citizens' organization which seeks to improve the quality of life in Jacksonville, Florida through citizen participation in the public affairs of the community. Each year JCCI identifies several major community issues and researches these urban problems via diverse citizen committees that are essentially a microcosm of the community. This diversity ensures the airing of opposing points of view and usually results in a balanced set of proposals for change. When the study is complete and has been accepted by the JCCI Board of Directors, the organization stands behind the proposals. A second JCCI committee group then works to bring the proposals to the attention of the public and to decision makers who can implement the recommendations.

In addition to this kind of community problem solving, JCCI works with the United Way of Jacksonville and the major funders of human services for improved planning and coordination of human services. Having just completed its tenth year, JCCI now has an impressive record of credible studies resulting in many positive changes, to the benefit of the community.

In 1981, after JCCI had made its program selection for the year, the Downtown Development Authority requested and commissioned a study on Downtown Derelicts and agreed to assume the role of implementing the study. The Downtown Development Authority was working hard to redevelop and revitalize the downtown area of Jacksonville. It felt that the presence of persons with an undesirable appearance (poorly groomed, smelly, or dirty) or whose behavior was socially unacceptable (intoxicated, talking aloud to themselves, sleeping in doorways, parks or alleys, or panhandling) detracted from a positive image of downtown and could deter other citizens from going to the downtown area.

The JCCI Downtown Derelict Study examined the nature, size and behavioral patterns of the above population, appraised the adequacy and appropriateness of services available to the population, and suggested criteria for the location of missions and other services for this population in order to serve the best interests of the total community. As Executive Director of JCCI, I directed and coordinated the research for this study with the assistance of Barbara Bermpohl. All writing was reviewed and appropriately revised by the citizens' committee of some 30 persons chaired by Dr. Earle Traynham of the University of North Florida.

As a part of the study, JCCI estimated the size of the local downtown derelict population. We counted the numbers of persons in the missions on the coldest night of the year, and added some who were taken in by cheap downtown hotels. We added those who were in the detoxification center and those public inebriates being held in the jail. To this number we added the count of a downtown policeman (done two years before) of persons sleeping outside under expressways, on streets, parks or in abandoned buildings. The total formed our maximum number. The lower estimate was derived from the fact that our downtown derelict population is highly seasonal. It is highest in early December and March when transients are moving to or from South Florida in pursuit of agricultural work. Note that this number of 150-300 does not include those deinstitutionalized mentally ill who are living in group homes near the downtown area and who may be at times frightening to other citizens. Nor does it include the new poor, or those persons who have recently become unemployed and are perhaps living with relatives. In short, the numbers of downtown derelicts and the number of homeless persons in the Jacksonville area may be quite different.

To put our local problem in perspective, we talked to service providers and local governments and planning councils in a number of cities. We did not include in our report the estimates from New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, or Detroit, cities which we considered to have a much larger problem but also to be quite different from Jacksonville. The cities we selected we saw as more comparable in that most were smaller cities in the South or West. They also were cities which had addressed the problem of downtown derelicts or the skid row population in some way.

The estimates from these cities, as we indicated in our study , were not based on a sound scientific methodology, and they were not all done at the same time. For example, the New Orleans count was a nose count performed by four college students in the late seventies. The count of 700 was much less than the anticipated 4000. The Norfolk figure was taken from a Chamber of Commerce task force report and the methodology was not described but was in agreement with a study by the Urban Research and Service Center, an affiliate of Old Dominion University. The Orlando number was a census count. To the best of my knowledge that number would include those in jails, group homes, and hospitals, as well as the homeless.

It should be remembered that in 1981 the plight of the homeless was not a popular cause nor the target of much Federal funding, much less the focus of Doonesbury. Communities were beginning to speculate and study the possible effects of reduced Federal funding or tightened eligibility requirements for food stamps and welfare programs. But few had actually attempted to count the homeless. This is an extremely difficult task because of the fluidity of the population, not to mention the problem of locating them since by definition they are without homes and usually without jobs.

The viewpoint of social service providers in Jacksonville today is that the population seeking shelter in the missions now consists of an increasing number of families. Previously the breadwinner would arrive alone in the city, seeking employment and would send for the family later. Now the family is arriving as a unit. Since most of the missions provide shelter only for the night, and do not provide daytime programs, women with children in this population have no place to go but the streets during the day. The Salvation Army's new shelter now under construction will alleviate this problem.

I appreciate the opportunity to be of help to this committee and will be happy to answer any questions to the best of my ability.

Marian Chambers
Executive Director
Jacksonville Community Council, Inc.

JACKSONVILLE COMMUNITY COUNCIL INC.

Downtown Derelicts study

A Report to the Downtown Development Authority • May, 1982

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The Downtown Development Authority is seeking to make downtown Jacksonville a dynamic and attractive place to work, play and live. A vital downtown is a key to the economic health of the community. The Authority's concern about the presence of "downtown derelicts" and the problems caused by them resulted in a request for this study, to be used as a guide as downtown redevelopment proceeds.

Webster defines a derelict as "a person abandoned or forgotten: one that is not a responsible or acceptable member of society." In this study a derelict may refer to one of any age and includes those who have rejected society's values. Such persons whose appearance is undesirable (poorly groomed, smelly or dirty) or whose behavior is socially unacceptable (intoxicated, talking aloud to themselves, sleeping in doorways or parks or alleys, or panhandling) detract from a positive image of downtown and may deter other citizens from going to the downtown area.

Although the Downtown Development Authority has jurisdiction over a much broader downtown geographical area, this study is primarily concerned with the Commercial Central Business District (CCBD) as defined in the zoning code.

The boundaries of the CCBD are generally Broad Street, Beaver Street, Newnan Street, and the St. Johns River.

The scope of this study includes:

- An analysis of the nature and size of the above population and the extent to which it presents a problem
- An appraisal of the adequacy and appropriateness of services available for these persons and projected needs for these services
- An appraisal of alternative approaches to reduce the numbers and impact of this population on downtown Jacksonville
- Criteria for the location of missions and other services for this population in order to serve best the interests of the total Jacksonville community

This study does not address other significant downtown problems such as shoplifting, drug peddling, and other criminal acts.

HIGHLIGHTS

MAJOR PROBLEMS	RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS
. Community conflict on best locations for services for derelicts.	. Location criteria to meet needs of derelicts and the resident poor and downtown development.
. Visibility of downtown derelicts contributing to a negative image of downtown.	. Downtown development. . Location of "attractions" to derelicts outside CCBD.
. Citizen fear of panhandlers, inebriates and the mentally ill.	. Public education program. . Downtown foot patrol to foster the perception of security and order.
. Inadequate coordination among missions; inadequate service statistics.	. No shelter expansion until need established. . Increased record keeping and coordination.
. Limited treatment of alcohol problems of downtown derelicts.	. Increased funding and capacity for detoxification program. . Incentives for police to use detoxification facility, rather than jail.
. Inadequate programming for deinstitutionalized mentally ill.	. Increased funding for programming for the mentally ill.

DOWNTOWN DERELICTS:

A PLAN TO MINIMIZE THEIR IMPACT ON THE REVITALIZATION OF DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE

BY

JACKSONVILLE COMMUNITY COUNCIL, INC.

FOR

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING FOR THE PROJECT
WAS PROVIDED VIA A CONTRACT WITH THE
CITY OF JACKSONVILLE, USING HUD
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
MONIES. (CONTRACT NO. 5504-3).

MAY, 1982

FINDINGS

Findings represent the data base of the committee. They are derived from the published materials listed in the references, facts reported by resource persons or from a consensus of committee understanding as reported by resource persons.

THE PROBLEM: NATURE AND IMPACT

The problems related to derelicts in downtown Jacksonville may be viewed through the eyes of citizens, downtown retailers, or law enforcement officials.

Complaints of citizens, as reported by the Downtown Development Authority, come primarily from shoppers who have been approached by panhandlers or derelicts. The unsavory appearance of public inebriates sleeping in doorways or in the park offends many citizens. However, a fear for personal safety outweighs their aesthetic concerns.

Downtown retailers, recognizing the general decline of downtown Jacksonville in the last 20 years, are striving to eliminate those negative factors which tend to drive customers away from the downtown area.

In the downtown area, customers complain of being approached by panhandlers in the stores and of the loitering of derelicts in and around the stores. The incidence of shoplifting and vandalism is considerably higher downtown than in stores located in suburban malls. However, according to reports by retailers and police, derelicts are not likely to be heavily involved in shoplifting.

A six month's survey, conducted by a major downtown retailer, reported 120 incidents of shoplifting and nuisance types of complaints. Thirty percent of these incidents were caused by non-residents, who may be part of the derelict population.

As a result of statistical information from the crime analysis division, the Sheriff's Department allocates a considerable portion of its resources to the downtown area. (The boundaries of this area are the St. Johns River, State Street, Washington Street, and Lee Street.) During 1981 the police made 1,094 arrests downtown on charges of disorderly intoxication, breach of the peace, and trespassing. Such arrests were highest on Fridays and Saturdays and between sunset and 3:00 a.m.

Police report a higher number of arrests for disorderly intoxication, breach of the peace, and trespassing offenses around the missions which provide shelter and in the Hemming Plaza area. Police are faced with the problem of attempting to remove from Hemming Plaza persons who have spent the night there and who use the park for sleeping during daytime hours as well.

THE JAIL

In addition to these arrests, public inebriates were taken to the jail a total of 5,259 times and generally detained from four to six hours. These "non-arrests" require on the average 22 minutes of a police officer's time, resulting in costs of $10.80 or an annual cost of $56,797 in 1981. Those arrests for disorderly intoxication require an average of 35 minutes of a police officer's time at a cost of $20.30 amounting to an annual cost of $74,656. Prosecution and court procedures add to the total costs.

From the point of view of the jail administration, caring for those persons who are chronic inebriates and those charged with disorderly intoxication, breach of peace and trespassing is a tremendous financial burden. The average jail inmate costs taxpayers $27.50 per day. However, chronic inebriates and those arrested for disorderly intoxication require much larger expenditures of public funds for their maintenance and protection in the jail environment. Because they are in a state of very poor health and malnutrition, they require intense and expensive medical attention within the jail.

UNIVERSALITY OF THE PROBLEM

The problems presented by derelicts in the downtown area of Jacksonville are not unique to this time or place.

In the social science literature, the population of undesirables is often described as "skid row men." The term "skid row" most often refers to a clustering of people and the facilities they use in one section or street of a city. In other cities such as Jacksonville, the "skid row" population is generally dispersed, with small pockets of concentration around cheap hotels, bars, or missions.

The "skid row" population is generally male, white, and predominately middle aged. Women constitute a very small part of this group. In recent years the average age of the population has been decreasing. Common characteristics are poverty, low self-esteem, excessive drinking, homelessness or a transient lifestyle, a lack of close relationships or family ties, a rejection of society's values (the work ethic, stability, etc.), and the prevalence of health problems (poor nutrition, alcoholism, venereal disease, tuberculosis, hypothermia). "Skid row" is at best an imprecise, aggregate concept composed of individuals with many variations.

Almost every major American city has had and continues to have a "skid row" problem to some degree. In the northern cities of Baltimore, New York and Philadelphia, the numbers of "skid row" men are very large. New York, for example, has an estimated homeless population of 36,000 and is now under court order to provide shelter for these persons.

Even where "skid row" is not a distinct geographical entity, it can be viewed as a functional part of the urban system. The "skid row" population exists in a symbiotic relationship to plasma centers, labor pools, liquor stores and taverns, cheap restaurants, cheap hotels, rooming houses, second-hand clothing stores, alcohol detoxification centers, missions, jails and public hospitals.

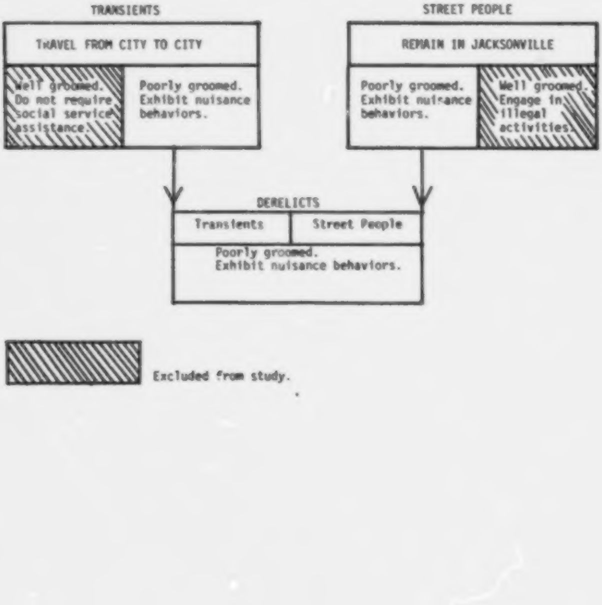
The numbers of derelicts or "skid rowers" increase in times of economic downturns and decrease in times of prosperity. In the current economic recession many cities are experiencing a greater population of homeless persons on the streets. Their numbers are increasing rapidly. In Jacksonville, the increase through 1981 has been slight. The Southeast has lagged behind the rest of the nation in experiencing the effects of the recession. As eligibility requirements for government financial assistance programs become more stringent, and unemployment rises, many of the poor are no longer able to cope. However, it should be noted that these additions to the numbers of homeless persons are probably quite different from the chronic "skid row" population and would not be considered as downtown derelicts.

A number of cities, like Jacksonville, have been concerned not only for the safety and basic needs of the "skid rowers", but also about the effect of the presence and visibility of these people on redevelopment of the downtown areas. Among those who have attempted to deal with this problem are Norfolk, Virginia; Orlando, Florida; Phoenix, Arizona; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Sacramento, California; Fresno, California; Portland, Oregon; Seattle, Washington; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Alexandria, Virginia.

DERELICTS - WHO ARE THEY?

Derelicts may be divided into two groups with different characteristics - transients and street people.

THE MAKEUP OF THE DERELICT POPULATION


TRANSIENTS
TRAVEL FROM CITY TO CITY
Well groomed. Do not require social service assistance.
Poorly groomed. Exhibit nuisance behaviors.
STREET PEOPLE
REMAIN IN JACKSONVILLE
Poorly groomed. Exhibit nuisance behaviors.
Well groomed. Engage in illegal activities.
DERELICTS
Transients
Street People
Poorly groomed. Exhibit nuisance behaviors.
Excluded from study.

TRANSIENTS

Transients are those who do not choose to remain in one community, but are here in Jacksonville for a few days or weeks before moving on to another place. Obviously, there are many transients whose behavior or appearance causes no problems at all. Other transients experiencing travel emergencies require special services but do not offend persons by their appearance or behavior. The transient population which might be considered undesirable is made up primarily of males. Their ages range from 18 - 65, with increasing numbers of younger men. This transient population increases in the fall and early winter as they head south and declines after a second peak in the springtime when the migrant population moves north. Some families are included in this group. Most travel by hitchhiking on the interstate and once in town, travel by foot. Many of these look to the missions for shelter and food and to the labor pools, plasma centers or panhandling for income.

STREET PEOPLE

The "street" people are composed of two subgroups, both of whom call Jacksonville home. One group has no local address - they sleep in missions, alleyways, under bridges or expressways, in public parks, or in vacant buildings. Many receive social security, food stamps, or some form of public assistance but manage their funds poorly. By the end of the month they are without funds. They also use the labor pools and plasma centers.

A second category of "street" people may refer to able bodied young, males, whose appearance may be satisfactory but who spend a lot of time on the streets, gaining income from involvement with prostitution, drugs, or stolen merchandise. Their behavior causes problems for downtown retailers and for citizens in the downtown area, although they do not fall within the definition of derelicts.

CHRONIC ALCOHOLICS

Scattered among the transients and street people to varying degrees are chronic alcoholics and the mentally ill. The problems of chronic alcoholics are discussed in greater detail on page 11.

MENTALLY ILL

Many of the mentally ill who have been treated in and released from the Northeast Florida State Hospital in Macclenny live in Adult Congregate Living Facilities (ACLF's) and boarding houses. In 1980 the Springfield area, within walking distance of downtown, housed 406 persons in 16 ACLF's. Some of these ACLF's are occupied by those without a diagnosed mental illness; others with a diagnosed mental illness are housed in unlicensed boarding homes.

Other communities report increasing numbers of the mentally ill among the so called downtown "undesirable" population. Nationally, between 1963 and 1980 those persons in mental hospitals decreased from 550,000 to 150,000. And in Florida in 1963, 10,000 were in mental hospitals, whereas in 1980 there were only 5,000. These figures reflect the implementation of a policy of removing people from treatment in large institutions and releasing them to outpatient treatment in their own communities. In most instances the funding to carry out the policy has been inadequate. In Jacksonville, as in many other communities, these persons are not receiving adequate follow-up care. There are very few programs or planned daily activities to help them to become an integral part of their home communities.

It is impossible to determine how many of these persons from the Springfield area make their way to the downtown area and become a part of the downtown derelict population, either because of their appearance, or socially unacceptable behaviors. Some mental health professionals have indicated that the group is made up primarily of those with the diagnosis of chronic schizophrenia. These persons are likely to avoid crowds and tend to be fearful of other people. Others who service these populations downtown believe that large numbers do walk in from the Springfield area to the downtown streets and engage in panhandling and other undesirable behaviors.

The downtown mentally ill population includes not only those released from institutions but also unknown numbers of those who have not yet sought treatment.

SIZE OF THE PROBLEM

It is not possible to quantify in precise terms the total numbers of downtown derelicts in Jacksonville. The groups defined above have considerable overlap.

THE COUNT IN JACKSONVILLE

In order to put the problem in some perspective and to understand at least in general terms its magnitude, JCCI has compiled a rough estimate of the daily population of downtown derelicts. The approximation ranges from 150-300.

The number varies with the season. The missions report peak occupancy in March and December and the labor pools confirm similar seasonal variations.

The methodology described below is the best available. The Census Bureau count for group quarters includes those who are homeless along with those in residence hotels, hospitals, nursing homes, boarding houses and jails, many of whom would not fall into the classification of derelicts.

On January 11, 1982, when the temperature dropped to a record low of 17 degrees Farenheit, the missions housed 144 persons. (Salvation Army 39; Trinity Rescue Mission, 67; City Rescue Mission, 33; and Christian Mission Center, 5.) Because of the extreme cold, the James Hotel took in 16 men who normally sleep outside. Seven public inebriates were in the jail (for at least part of January 11). Gateway Community Services detoxification center houses an average of three downtown derelicts per day. Therefore, approximately 170 derelicts were housed on January 11.

It is not known how many additional persons spent that night outdoors or in vacant buildings. However, a downtown policeman counted approximately 150 derelicts sleeping outside or in vacant buildings on a night in December 1979.

This count does not include the mentally ill or marginally mentally ill who reside in boarding houses within walking distance of downtown.

OTHER CITIES

Estimates of the derelict population in other cities as related to the total population of those cities are seen below in the chart. These estimates, like the one for Jacksonville, are not based on a sound scientific methodology and their validity is open to some question. At best they can be considered broad indicators of the magnitude of the problem.

ESTIMATES OF DERELICT POPULATIONS IN SELECTED CITIES

CITY	POPULATION[1]	ESTIMATED DERELICT POPULATION[3]
San Jose, CA	637,000	1,000
New Orleans, LA	557,000	700
Seattle, WA	494,000	500 - 2,000
Norfolk, VA	267,000	100 - 300
Fresno, CA	218,000	600
Jacksonville, FL[2]	138,000	150 - 300
Orlando, FL	128,000	400

[1] Source for Population figures: 1981 Statistical Abstract of the United States, 102nd Edition, U. S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

[2] Population within pre-consolidation city limits, U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1980.

[3] Source of data: Government and social service personnel in selected cities.

A HAVEN FOR TRANSIENTS?

Jacksonville was described as a #1 haven for derelicts by a NBC "Weekend" television show in 1979. According to NBC, 50,000 transients stop here each year because of Jacksonville's reputation. The reputation is derived from the presence and quality of three major missions. (The City Rescue Mission was in full operation at that time). These views have become part of the conventional wisdom of Jacksonville.

The figure of 50,000 transients was compiled by NBC by adding together the annual number of "lodgings" at the missions, not persons. A more realistic but liberal figure, estimating numbers of persons, and eliminating those who call Jacksonville home, is 12,000. (Not all of those staying at the missions are transients. And of those who are transients, many stay two to three nights and make several repeat visits during the year.)

A comparison of the free shelter capacity of Jacksonville with that of other selected cities is shown below:

FREE SHELTER CAPACITY OF SELECTED CITIES FOR SHELTERING TRANSIENTS

CITY	POPULATION	# OF BEDS AVAILABLE	BEDS PER 1,000 PERSONS
Philadelphia, PA	1,688,000	383	.23
New Orleans, LA	557,000	367	.66
Norfolk, VA	267,000	144	.54
Tampa, FL	272,000	112	.41
Fresno, CA	218,000	120	.55
Jacksonville, FL	138,000	139	1.00
Orlando, FL	128,000	197	1.54

Source of data: Telephone interviews with social service personnel, January - February, 1982.

Despite the presence or absence of services, Jacksonville will continue to attract transients because of its climate, the proximity of I-95 to the downtown area, and its position as the gateway to Florida.

SERVICES AVAILABLE

Jacksonville provides a number of services currently for the downtown derelict population. However, data on those served and coordination of some services are lacking.

Shelter

Currently, two private agencies located near the Commercial Central Business District (CCBD) provide the major shelter for this population. Trinity Rescue Mission accommodates 48 males and 11 females and the Salvation Army's Red Shield Lodge houses 28 males and 10 females.

A third agency, the Christian Mission Center, provides beds (but no meals) for 7 - 9 males. In addition, the City Rescue Mission currently provides 33 beds for males, in temporary facilities. A fire in March, 1981, destroyed the Mission's permanent home.

These agencies all have a strong religious (Christian) orientation with conversion of their clients to Christian beliefs and way of life as a primary goal. Most provide dinner, a shower, bed, and breakfast for their clients. Clients may enter at approximately 5:00 p.m. in the evening and are released in the early morning hours between 5:00 and 7:00 a.m., so that the mission staff can prepare meals and clean the accommodations and the clients can seek work. The agencies will accept anyone in genuine need of shelter, except those who are intoxicated or unmanageable.

Each has its own separate restrictions on the numbers of days' lodgings which are given. The Red Shield Lodge permits only one night's free lodging with an extension at $5.00 a night if the person is actively seeking employment and receiving counseling. The Trinity Rescue Mission provides three free nights every 30 days, with extensions under unusual circumstances. The Christian Mission Center allows for only two free nights unless evidence is shown of seeking work and attending church. The City Rescue Mission allowed two free nights every 60 days, with unlimited accommodations at $4.00 per night.

Although these shelter agencies communicate with each other frequently, they make little effort to prevent a person from rotating from one agency to the other and thereby extending his stay in the city. There is no coordination among the agencies in terms of policies or services provided.

The data collected by these agencies are sparse. All compute the number of lodgings provided per year and the number of meals served. All record some client information such as name, destination, home address, age and sex. For a variety of reasons data on the exact numbers of persons served, the numbers of repeaters, the frequency of their return visits, and a comparison of the number of true transients to those street people who remain in Jacksonville are not available. Most of the agencies operate with small staff, some of whom are former clients. They have a greater concern with delivering the services than with compiling statistics. The agencies are not required to collect much data. They will not allow others to perform the analysis of data for them because of client confidentiality. However, as a United Way agency, the Salvation Army must provide extensive service statistics on an annual basis and must adhere to guidelines and standards regarding program effectiveness and development, fiscal management, and the composition and procedures of a voluntary Board of Directors.

In addition to the missions, incarceration provides overnight shelter at the Duval County Jail for those charged with specific offenses. The Alcohol Care Unit of Gateway Community Services provides shelter and care for 72 hours for intoxicated persons. Currently, it serves two or three transient or street people per day. Several halfway houses provide free beds for alcohol rehabilitation. And several inexpensive hotels in the downtown area cater to people who work in the labor pools, including transients.

FOOD

Breakfast and dinner are provided by the missions. On occasions persons avail themselves of the meals without the shelter. Free noon meals are provided by two major sources, the Clara White Mission and downtown churches. The Clara White Mission serves a free lunch on Mondays through Fridays. It estimates that 40% of its clientele are true transients and 60% are local poor people who live nearby. On weekends the downtown churches provide lunch. On Saturdays the Fransciscans at the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church serve sandwiches and on Sundays four Protestant churches (St. John's Cathedral, First Presbyterian, Snyder Memorial Methodist and First United Methodist) take turns feeding the poor. Numbers served by the churches range from 60 to 150 per day. No records are kept and there is no way of determining how many are transients, the resident poor, or street people.

CLOTHING

All of the above agencies provide some used clothing as well.

OTHER SERVICES

The Downtown Ecumenical Services Council, established in September, 1981 attempts to coordinate the services of downtown churches for transients and indigents. Formerly, these services were handled individually by each one of the churches. Offices of the Council, located in the First Presbyterian Church, are open from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday. This organization typically provides counseling by experienced clergy, financial assistance, referral, and directions to the agencies which provide the services.

Traveler's Aid Society provides referrals, financial assistance, and emergency stopgap measures for travelers on route to another destination. Traveler's Aid serves only travelers and newcomers to Jacksonville. Referrals are made to agencies which offer shelter and other services.

BASIC SERVICE PROVIDERS TO DOWNTOWN DERELICTS

(Food, Shelter, Referral)

	SERVICES PROVIDED						FUNDING				
	FOOD	CLOTHING	BATH FACILITIES	SHELTER (# BEDS)	RELIGIOUS SERVICE	REFERRAL	CITY	RELIGIOUS	UNITED WAY	DONATIONS	CLIENT FEES
Salvation Army (Red Shield Lodge) 1125 East Church Street	breakfast & dinner	X	X	28 male 10 female	X (Optional)	X	X		X	X	X
Trinity Rescue Mission 901 West Bay Street	breakfast & dinner	X	X	48 male 11 female	X	X		X		X	
City Rescue Mission 30 Cottage Ave. (temporary address) 700 Laura Street (former address)	breakfast & dinner	X	X	formerly 96 male presently 33 male	X	X		X		X	
Christian Mission Center 743 West Ashley Street		X	X	7 - 9 male	X	X		X		X	
Clara White Mission 613 West Ashley Street	Lunch Mon. - Fri.	X					X		X	X	
Immaculate Conception Catholic Church 21 East Duval Street	Lunch Sat.	X								X	
St. John Cathedral, 256 E. Church St. First Presbyterian, 118 E. Monroe St. Snyder Memorial United Methodist, 226 Laura St. First United Methodist, 225 E. Duval St.	Lunch Sun.							X		X	
Downtown Ecumenical Services Council 118 East Monroe Street	check to supermarket, food pantry	X				X		X		X	
Traveler's Aid Society 217 West Church Street	check to supermarket	X				X	X		X	X	X

INCOME SOURCES

Income sources for derelicts are limited. Jacksonville has at least five labor pools located near or in downtown. These businesses serve as employment agencies matching unskilled workers with available jobs on a daily basis. All pay the minimum wage of $3.35 an hour with higher rates for skilled jobs. The work provided is largely unskilled manual labor which includes yard work, warehousing, moving offices, cleaning barges at the shipyard, construction, and heavy lifting. Transportation to and from the job is provided if bus transportation is not available. Paychecks are issued at the end of each day.

The work force at the labor pools is largest in the winter although greater numbers of jobs are available in the spring and summer. The labor pools report that they serve a mixture of transients and local persons. Estimates vary from 60% local, 40% transient to 80% local and 20% transient. Their doors open at 6:00 a.m. in the morning. Many of their clients are regulars but not all wish to work five days a week.

Another source of income for derelicts is provided by the two plasma centers. The Jacksonville Plasma Center is located downtown and the Florida Plasma Corporation is in the Brooklyn area. The plasma centers operate from 6:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday

LABOR POOLS NEAR OR IN DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE

AGENCIES	STARTING DATE (at present location)	CHARACTERISTICS OF WORKERS			AVERAGE DAILY # EMPLOYED	RESIDENCE OF WORKERS
		AGE	SEX	RACE		
X-Tra Helpers 1801 N. Main	1976	18-60 Most 22-35	98% Male	50% B 50% W	80-120	Boarding houses, DT & Springfield Transients: James Hotel
Handi-Man 27 E. Adams	1981	18-63 Most 29-50	Male	20-25% B 75-80% W	50-150	Palms Hotel, James Hotel, Johnson Terrace. 60% residents, 40% transients.
Help Unlimited 1638 N. Main	1978	20-40	Male	50% B 50% W	40-60 100+ apply	Boarding houses, 8th & Main; 70% residents, 30% transients
Tempo Talent 25 E. Beaver	1976	18-60 Most 18-40	Male	50% B 50% W	70 100 apply	Springfield, Riverside, Westside, Northside. Most are regulars.
Personnel Pool of Jax. 96 Riverside Avenue	1978	18+	Most Male	50% B 50% W	80-100	Springfield - whites, Riverside - blacks, 80% residents, 20% transients

Source: Managers of listed labor pools

and pay $8.00 to $10.00 for plasma. Their clientele are mostly local people with approximately 10% transients or new customers. The process of giving plasma takes a minimum of an hour and a half and may take up to four hours if waiting is necessary. A person my sell plasma up to two times a week.

The plasma centers are regulated by the Federal Food and Drug Administration and by the State of Florida. They are licensed and must conform with sanitation standards as regulated by the City's Department of Health, Welfare and Bioenvironmental Services. The centers sell the frozen plasma to commercial laboratories which manufacture needed products such as an antihemophiliac factor used for bleeders, RH immune globulin, and tetanus toxoid. The need for plasma is greater than a donor system could supply.

PLASMA CENTERS IN JACKSONVILLE

	JAX. PLASMA CENTER	FLA. PLASMA CORP.
Address	138 West Bay St.	116 Riverside Ave.
Hours	6:00- 3:00, M-F	6:00-3:00, M-F
Payment	$8.00	$10-$8*
Beds	45	38
# of Employees	18	17
Eligibility	18-60 yrs.	18-66 yrs.
# of Clients	500/wk 35 new/wk	500/wk 50 new/wk
Race	50%-B/50%-W	50%-B/50%-W
Age	20's-30's	mid 20's
Sex	Males (most)	Males 80%, Females 20%

*$25 bonus for 25 consecutive visits
SOURCE: Managers of Jacksonville Plasma Center
Florida Plasma Corporation

NEED FOR SERVICES

Planning for the need for and appropriateness of services should include consideration of the following factors:

- If unemployment rises and/or federal funding for social services decreases, the need for shelter and food in the community will increase. This expanded poor population will require assistance for a longer period of time than now allowed by the missions which provide shelter. In addition to derelicts, the population is likely to include both families and the elderly who will also need shelter and food. According to most economic predictions this need will be temporary during a cyclical recession.

- There is considerable agreement among service providers and police to indicate that many derelicts prefer to spend the nights on the streets rather than in the missions, if the weather is not too cold. Some do not want to listen to sermons; others distrust the mainstream of society, including social service providers.

- There is general agreement among mission employees, jail and law enforcement personnel, managers of labor pools and plasma centers, and ministers of downtown churches that an extensive communications network exists among many of those who adopt a transient lifestyle and move from place to place. Many know before they come to a city what services are available, where the services are located, the quality of the accommodations and the food served, the applicable city ordinances and the attitudes and enforcement policies of the police. Therefore, the availability and quality of services may serve as a drawing card to transients thereby increasing the demand for services. Conversely, if services are scant, waiting lines long, and police are zealous in making arrests, transients are likely to choose another stopping-off place or to move on quickly.

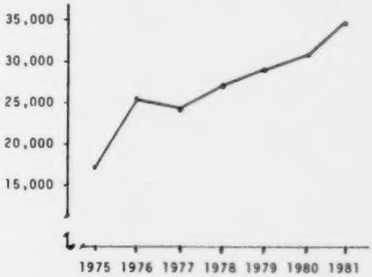
An objective assessment of the need for increased bed capacity for derelicts is lacking. Data were requested on the numbers of lodgings per month provided by each mission for the last five years, and the numbers of persons turned away when facilities were full. The data received showed no significant trends. However, the data received were incomplete. In addition, the number of beds assigned by the Salvation Army to transients has fluctuated over the years. Finally, none of the missions keeps ongoing records of the numbers of clients turned away.

Service providers assert that there is a need for longer term shelter for those men who are attempting to locate in Jacksonville and obtain permanent employment. Two to three days is not enough time to find a permanent job and to receive the first paycheck. However, no data are available on the numbers of mission clients who do find employment, either temporary or permanent, or on the numbers whose stay is extended.

The number of meals served by Clara White Mission has steadily increased over the last few years as indicated on the chart below. The Mission served 25,083 meals in 1976 and 34,384 in 1981, an increase of over 30 percent. Assuming that the trend continues and that the Mission is able to provide the service, projections call for an increase of over 18 percent to 40,646 by 1985.

Meals Served by Clara White Mission

1975-1981



EXPANSION PLANS

Present service levels (shelter and food) will most likely increase in the near future if the plans of three agencies are implemented.

CITY RESCUE MISSION

The City Rescue Mission, a private church-supported agency, provided beds for 96 men plus meals at its Laura Street address for many years. Since the fire in March 1981 which rendered the building unusable, the Rescue Mission has worked to re-open its doors. A proposal to rebuild on another site was denied by the Planning Commission.

The Board of Directors of the Rescue Mission then decided to rebuild the mission using the shell of the old building with a new design for its interior. In order to keep clients off the street and out of the public view, an inside waiting area was designed. This waiting area plus a separate shelter area for women required a reduced number of beds for men. The plans provide for beds for 38 transient men, 12 women, and 12 working men. However, compliance with zoning requirements remains to be resolved.

Another option favored by the City Rescue Mission is a "work farm" in a rural location. If this option is adopted, the mission plans to purchase a shuttle bus to transport clients from downtown to the farm. Site selection and specific plans have not yet been made.

SUMMARY OF EXISTING BED CAPACITY FOR DERELICTS AND PLANNED INCREASES IN CAPACITY

AGENCY	EXISTING BED CAPACITY/PLANNED INCREASE IN BED CAPACITY		
	*SHORT TERM		LONG TERM
	MEN	WOMEN	MEN
City Rescue Mission	33/+5	0/+12	0/+12
Trinity Rescue Mission	48/0	11/0	0/0
Salvation Army Red Shield Lodge	28/+12	10/0	0/+20
Christian Mission Center	9/+?	0/-	0/-
TOTAL	118/+17	21/+12	0/+32

*All the missions allow for an extended stay for clients under some circumstances. It is not known how many of these "short-term" beds are being used for extended stays.

SALVATION ARMY

In 1973 the Salvation Army hired a consulting firm to conduct a needs assessment and feasibility study. Need for the transient shelter was determined by recording the numbers of those served and those turned away during a one year period.

The 1974 consultant's report recommended a facility with a capacity of 100 beds but budget limitations cut the number to 70. Current plans propose beds for 40 transient men, 10 women, with provisions for families staying together. Twenty additional beds will be set aside as low cost lodging for working men seeking permanent employment.

As part of the Salvation Army's expansion plans, it is proposed that the transient shelter will be relocated to the Army's downtown site at Church and Main Streets. This will allow better coordination of all its programs and integration of social service casework with the shelter clients. (The Salvation Army's Adult Rehabilitation Center for alcoholics will remain on Park Street.)

CHRISTIAN MISSION CENTER

In addition, the Christian Mission Center plans this year to open a facility to house women. Location and bed capacity of the facility have not yet been determined.

ALCOHOL ABUSE

Alcohol-related problems are a major component of the downtown derelict problem, contributing to a negative downtown image, placing a severe strain on public facilities and services, and creating serious health problems for the alcohol abusers themselves. In Jacksonville, 50% of all arrests are alcohol-related. The high costs to taxpayers for transporting public inebriates to the jail and attending to them in the jail have been reported. Other community costs for the care of public inebriates are reflected in the budgets of University Hospital and Gateway Community Services (the primary agency providing services for alcoholics).

A new approach to treatment of alcoholics was recommended to the states via the Federal Uniform Alcoholism and Treatment Act. In this approach alcoholism is viewed as a disease requiring medical treatment. Public intoxication should, therefore, not be considered a criminal offense, in contrast to disorderly intoxication.

The implementation of this new policy brought about similar results in many different parts of the country.

The realities of the new policy turned out to be different from the expectations. Police and law enforcement officials expected to be relieved of the costly and time consuming functions of taking public inebriates to the jail and caring for them there. The medical professionals involved in the treatment of alcoholics expected to be able to produce results and recovery as a result of treatment under the new policy. As implementation evolved, the chronic inebriates continued to revolve through the detoxification facilities with high numbers of repeaters continuing. Alcohol treatment professionals became discouraged with patients who did not cooperate and preferred to treat those who would respond to treatment by participation in the longer term rehabilitation programs.

As a result, the alcohol treatment professionals became more and more selective about which patients would be accepted into detoxification centers and began to shift more funds into long-term rehabilitation and treatment. The police, in turn, became increasingly impatient with many trips required taking patients back and forth to the detox centers and to hospitals and to the jail. Many felt they were simply babysitting and serving as assistants to the medical community. As a result, the police eventually gave up on the detoxification facilities and returned to taking the public inebriates to jail for short periods. The eventual outcome was that the "skid row" chronic inebriates and their problems were no longer being addressed.

The Florida Legislature passed the Myers Act in 1973, decriminalizing public drunkenness in Florida. Following this, the City of Jacksonville began to operate a detoxification facility with up to 68 beds in service. An immediate result of the new policy was a decline in the death rate of the public inebriate. Beginning in 1979 the City gave up public delivery of these services and provided the matching local funds to a private organization, Gateway Community Services, which enabled them to obtain state dollars to provide a full range of services for alcoholics in Jacksonville.

Gateway Community Services provides comprehensive treatment of alcoholism, including outpatient counseling for first-timers, long term residential treatment for the chronic alcoholic, short term residential treatment for those with less advanced symptoms, halfway houses, and the detoxification program (72 to 96 hours).

In March, 1981 the new management took over the operation of the detoxification center and reduced its capacity to 25 beds. When this new Alcoholism Care Unit opened, 90% of the referrals were from the police and 10% from family and friends of community residents. Nearly a year later, 66% of the referrals came from the community, neighbors and friends and only 33% were brought by the police. At the same time, requirements for entrance to the detoxification facility are stiffer than before. A certain alcohol level in the blood is required, unmanageable persons and those unwilling to stay 72 hours are not admitted, and others are deemed to require hospital treatment. As a result, during the last quarter of 1981 the detoxification center averaged four empty beds per night and at the same time the jail was experiencing admissions for public intoxication at an average rate of 14 per day.

Jacksonville, by Federal court order, must limit its jail population to 418. Inebriates picked up by police and taken to the jail are not included in the jail count. They are placed in a holding cell in the jail for a period of four to six hours and then released again to the streets.

The capacity of a jail to provide medical care is somewhat limited. With fewer of the chronic public inebriates receiving supervised detoxification at a medical facility, many are receiving less than adequate medical care.

Funding for a complete range of treatment for alcoholics is inadequate to meet the community need. Only 5% of those served in the detoxification center are admitted to longer range treatment and rehabilitation, partially because of a lack of funding, and also because many do not desire to enroll in rehabilitation programs. Responding to a scarcity of funds, the Mental Health Board acted to place more of its dollars in long term treatment, where the prognosis for recovery is brighter.

The prognosis for chronic alcoholics who do not enter treatment is poor, with a 3% recovery rate estimated by national experts. Locally, police report that 70% of those picked up for public intoxication are repeaters. Of the 1,565 patients seen by Gateway Community Services for detoxification between March 1, 1981 and February 28, 1982, 219 (14%) were readmitted three or more times, accounting for 35% of the total admissions to the program.

Although the numbers of public inebriates are much greater around 8th and Main Streets than downtown, complaints from citizens are fewer in Springfield. As a result, police intervention is greater downtown. The Sheriff has a responsibility to protect both the derelicts and the general public.

MOVEMENT PATTERNS OF DERELICTS

The lifestyles and daily movements of downtown derelicts cannot be clearly determined by existing surveys or textbooks but must be deduced from observation and opinions provided by the missions, police, the jail, the detoxification center, downtown retailers, churches, welfare agencies, labor pools, and plasma centers and those who have interviewed derelicts. Each sees these people at different times of day and night and under different circumstances.

As dawn breaks in downtown Jacksonville these persons emerge from sleeping places in parks, alleyways, under expressways, vacant buildings, and the various missions. Some make their way directly to downtown bars which open at 6:00 a.m. At the time when the numbers of derelicts are greatest and most concentrated, few ordinary citizens are on the downtown streets. Some, looking for legitimate work, go to the labor pools. Of every 100 making this trip, approximately 60 may be successful, depending on the season. Others may walk to the plasma centers where a visit may take up to half their day, earning them $8.00 to $10.00 in cash payments. Some seek assistance at the City Welfare Offices or the Downtown Ecumenical Service Council. Panhandling, particularly on Main Street and Hemming Plaza, may provide money for others. Those who have not found work for the day may be seen lining up along with Jacksonville's resident poor at Clara White Mission for lunch. When the weather is warm, many may spend time at Hemming Plaza on the benches. If it is cold, the public library may be the only downtown shelter available.

Severe and multiple health problems bring many to University Hospital. Intoxication increases their vulnerability and many become victims of robbery or abuse.

By 5:00 p.m. groups of these people may be seen returning from the labor pools and using the downtown bars to cash their daily checks. Those who wish to spend the night at the missions and who are not intoxicated must arrive there between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. Once admitted they are not allowed to leave the mission until early morning. Some who have found work on that particular day may rent a room in a cheap downtown hotel. (Others who work consistently at the labor pools live in the cheaper downtown hotels and behave as law abiding citizens.) Those who have been picked up by the police for public intoxication may reappear on the streets within four to six hours to continue their activities.

As a group these people tend to prefer areas of moderate but not intense activity. As redevelopment occurs in cities they tend to move away from quality development. They usually prefer fringe areas where their presence is more easily tolerated by citizens.

LOCATION OF SERVICES

Services for the downtown derelict population of Jacksonville and "attractions" to that population are scattered. Most are located within one mile of the CCBD.

The four existing shelters are currently located outside the CCBD:

Trinity Rescue Mission,
    901 West Bay Street
Salvation Army Red Shield Lodge,
    1125 East Church Street
Christian Mission Center,
    743 West Ashley Street
    (one block from the CCBD)
City Rescue Mission,
    30 Cottage Avenue (Springfield)

The major food provider for lunch, the Clara White Mission, is also located just outside the CCBD.

However, the Salvation Army plans to relocate the Red Shield Lodge within the CCBD at Main and Church Streets. And the City Rescue Mission plans to rebuild at 700 Laura Street, just outside the CCBD.

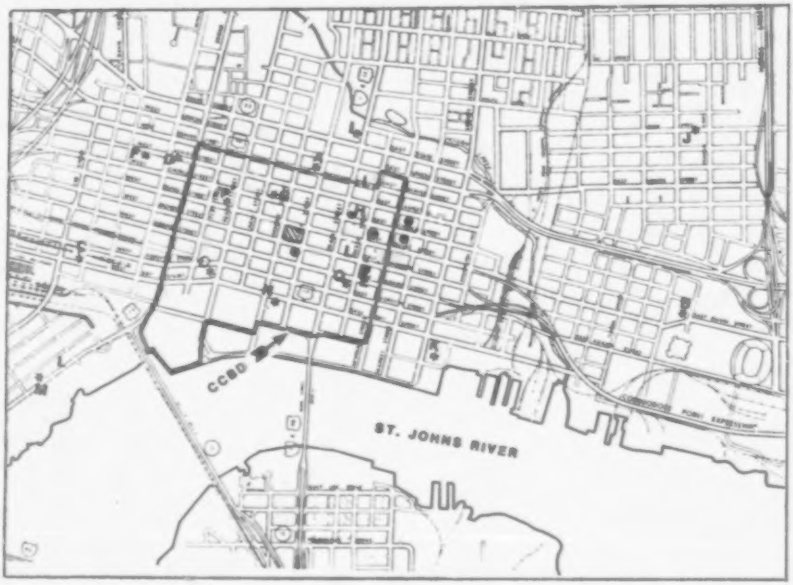
Located within the CCBD are:
- Traveler's Aid Society
- The Haydon Burns Library
- Two bus stations
- Jax. Plasma Center - 138 W. Bay St.
- Downtown Ecumenical Service Council
- Snyder Memorial Methodist Church
- Immaculate Conception Church
- First Presbyterian Church
- Two labor pools:
  - Handi-Man, 27 E. Adams Street
  - Tempo Talent, 25 E. Beaver St.
- Several bars
- Several inexpensive hotels
- Pawn shops

DERELICT TRAFFIC PATTERNS

Opinions on the ideal location for agencies serving derelicts vary widely. There is little objective data on which to base such judgments. However, there is general agreement among service providers and law enforcement officials on the movement patterns of derelicts in Jacksonville. Information from other cities confirms the general patterns.

- Most enter the city from I-95 via hitchhiking.
- Within the city most are dependent on walking or occasionally buses for transportation.
- Agencies located within one mile of the central retail area seem to be accessible to derelicts without any evidence of difficulty. For example, the Red Shield Lodge operated by the Salvation Army is located near the Gator Bowl and remains full most of the year. Other cities report similar experiences.
- Transients or derelicts usually come to the center of the city when they first arrive.
- Derelicts appear to be attracted to the core city area. However, as quality development occurs they usually move to the fringes surrounding the core. Therefore, as a city progresses in downtown redevelopment, the derelict problem is likely to shift to the outskirts of the core city area.

FACILITIES FREQUENTED BY DOWNTOWN DERELICTS



KEY

A	City Rescue Mission (former site)
B	Salvation Army Red Shield Lodge
C	Trinity Rescue Mission
D	Clara White Mission
E	Downtown Ecumenical Services Council
F	Christian Mission Center
G	Traveler's Aid Society
H	Salvation Army Administrative Offices
I	Welfare Division, City of Jacksonville
J	Gateway Community Services Alcoholism Care Unit
K	Duval County Jail
L	Labor Pools
M	Florida Plasma Corporation
N	Jacksonville Plasma Center
O	Greyhound Bus Lines
P	Trailways Bus System
Q	Haydon Burns Library
■	Hemming Plaza
●	Downtown churches which serve food

The Commercial Central Business District (CCBD) also contains:

5 taverns and liquor stores
5 pawn shops
4 inexpensive hotels

OTHER FACTORS

Retailers would prefer to have service agencies on one side or another of the central retail district rather than surrounding the district as is presently the case. They believe this would cut down on the derelict traffic going through the center of the city. Most service agencies prefer a central location because of ease of access for their clients. Law enforcement officials prefer locations away from the center of the city. They believe this would serve as a deterrent to some of the panhandling activities and would make Jacksonville less attractive to and less convenient for transients.

There is no popular choice for location of these facilities. Employers with large numbers of female employees do not want such facilities located near their business. The fears of women for their safety and security create costs for these employers, although derelicts are not likely to inflict bodily harm. Since the elderly also tend to be fearful and more vulnerable, a location near housing for the elderly is also not desirable.

In some cities services have been clustered within a compact area. In general, this has not worked well and most of these cities are now struggling to decentralize their "skid row" areas. The areas are in perpetual decline and have no constituencies to work for improvement.

The Jacksonville Planning Department staff recommends that services for derelicts in Jacksonville might be located within one general area but not tightly clustered. Possibilities include the area between downtown and I-95 or areas of industrial development.

APPROACHES FROM OTHER CITIES

Although many cities have studied and acted on the problem of downtown derelicts, none has succeeded in eliminating the problem. Some have reduced the visibility of the problem by actions which resulted in shifting it to an area outside the CCBD. Others have sought to reduce the numbers of transients coming into a city by placing restrictions on services and locating services and attractions away from the city center. In some cities the problem of alcoholism was seen as paramount: solutions sought to replace mechanisms of social control (law enforcement) with medical treatment. And, some cities concentrated their efforts on supplying the basic needs for shelter, food, etc. to the population while at the same time attempting to change their underlying values and lifestyles and aiding them in securing permanent jobs.

In Orlando, increased police efforts to enforce the laws prohibiting "nuisance" behaviors proved effective in the short run. However, the expense of this increased law enforcement was prohibitive. When police activity decreased to "normal" levels, the derelicts returned to downtown Orlando.

In Newark, the use of highly visible foot patrols did impart a feeling of security, safety, and order to citizens, although there was no effect on crime rates. In addition to the fear of violence, many citizens fear being bothered by inebriates, panhandlers, or the mentally ill. The role of the policeman as watchman, maintaining order and informal community standards, was seen as highly important.

Still other communities found that downtown development itself provided at least a partial solution. Quality development caused a shifting of the derelict population. At the same time, more "ordinary citizens" used the downtown area and the derelict population became less noticeable, if not fewer in numbers.

Specific strategies adopted or recommended include:

LAW, REGULATIONS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

- designing zoning ordinances to eliminate plasma centers and labor pools from the central business district (Tampa)
- regulating and thereby limiting plasma centers by requiring permits for clients or limiting the selling of plasma to once every eight days (Miami, Norfolk)
- enforcing health and sanitation codes to eliminate undesirable establishments and vacant buildings (Alexandria)
- closing alcoholic beverage control stores in the skid row area (Alexandria, Seattle)
- accelerating levels of law enforcement for public intoxication, loitering, etc. and using foot patrols (Orlando, Seattle)
- enforcing "interdiction" ordinances, which make it illegal to sell alcoholic beverages to those declared habitual drunkards (Alexandria, Norfolk)
- moving missions away from the central business district (New Orleans, Orlando)
- presenting alcohol offenders with a choice of jail or a bus ticket out of state (New Orleans)
- establishing a work-house facility for post-conviction detention of repeat offenders (Orlando)

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

- designing mission facilities with inside congregating areas to keep clients from loitering outside (Mobile)
- incorporating design factors for benches, buildings and landscaping to discourage loitering - i.e., short benches unsuitable for reclining, the absence of alleyways between buildings, walls with spikes or ridges to prevent use for seating, and the choice of plants and bushes such as pyracantha or Spanish bayonets. (Winston-Salem)

SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING

- tearing down existing cheap housing and replacing it with housing of higher quality (New Orleans, Sacramento)
- providing outreach workers to encourage the derelict population to use available social services (Alexandria)
- providing transportation to available services
- providing free or low-cost longer term shelter (Columbus, New York)
- increasing coordination and record keeping by service providers to prevent possible abuses and to aid in identifying need (Orlando)
- rehabilitating sub-standard hotels and renting them to skid-row men, using rent subsidies from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (Detroit, Portland)

TREATMENT OF ALCOHOLISM

- providing a complete range of services for chronic alcoholics (Philadelphia, Fresno, Norfolk)
- providing "boozer cruisers" staffed by civilians to transport inebriates to the detoxification center (Sacramento)
- locating detoxification services thirty miles from the city center so that the men are not likely to leave before treatment is completed because of the difficulty in returning to the city (Seattle)

PUBLIC AWARENESS

- creating public education campaigns to discourage citizens from yielding to panhandlers and thereby promoting the alcohol habit (Seattle)

Most communities recognized the necessity of providing services to a city's existing derelict population. But there was a lack of clarity about at what point the level of services provided might serve as a drawing card for outsiders and might foster dependency.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions express the value judgments of the committee, based on the findings.

NATURE OF POPULATION

- The downtown derelict population is a diverse, changing group, consisting largely of indigent transients, vagrants, street people, and some portions of the mentally ill who reside primarily in adult congregate living facilities (ACLF's).

- Although the general public may be frightened or aesthetically offended by the presence of derelicts downtown, derelicts are not likely to inflict bodily harm. The perception of the problem is worse than the reality, as evidenced by the numbers and comparisons with other cities. For example, groups of men returning from temporary employment as day laborers may be viewed by the public as part of the derelict population when, in fact, some are residents of Jacksonville awaiting transportation to their homes.

- The subgroups included in the downtown derelict population face a variety of problems for which society must provide some assistance. In addition to the common problems of poverty and generally poor health, three of the more acute problems are:

    - chronic inebriation or alcoholism
    - mental illness
    - inability to manage income

- The size of the downtown derelict population is determined by factors which are only partly controllable. Derelicts are part of the urban landscape; they are present in every metropolitan area. Florida is a growth state with an attractive climate. Jacksonville is the first, large city in Florida along Interstate 95. However, the overall "attractiveness" of Jacksonville may be reduced if service providers are more selective of clients served and derelicts know that they cannot "make the rounds" from one agency to another.

- Derelicts react to the responses they receive from the general public. They tend to avoid areas where police visibility is high and citizen tolerance is low.

- Panhandling is an activity that requires the participation of two people, the derelict and the one who contributes money. Both sides of the transaction should be addressed to discourage panhandling in Jacksonville. Panhandlers who do not receive contributions in one place will move to another, more lucrative area.

SERVICES

- The availability of food and shelter services provided to the downtown derelict population in Jacksonville compares favorably with other cities reviewed.

- Based on all available data from the missions in Jacksonville for the last five years, there is no demonstrated need for a permanent increase in bed capacity for derelicts. However, these trying to establish themselves with permanent employment in Jacksonville may need a low-cost housing alternative until they receive their first paycheck. Evidence does show an increasing demand for food services as the Clara White Mission has experienced a steady increase since 1977. The health of our nation's economy over the next few years may have an impact on these needs, but it is still too early to assess this.

- Jacksonville lacks a coordinated effort to meet the needs of its local derelict population and to discourage a further influx of derelicts. Each of the missions, labor pools, and plasma centers, measures success in quantitative terms, i.e., meals served, lodgings provided, religious conversions, job placements provided, or pints of plasma purchased. Presently, there are insufficient statistical data available on derelicts for coordinated program planning.

- For derelicts who are unable to find work, options for spending daytime hours are limited. These options include bars, the streets and parks, the plasma centers and the public library.

- Derelicts desiring to cash checks derived from day labor or welfare, have few, if any, options other than downtown bars. That option tends to aggravate the problem of excessive drinking by derelicts.

- The location of service providers does not appear to have any noticeable impact on the demand for their services; i.e., derelicts seem to be as mobile as is necessary to obtain desired services.

- Relying on an increased level of arrests for nuisance behaviors to solve the downtown derelict problems or to deter derelicts from coming to Jacksonville may be effective but is expensive and a poor investment of the taxpayers' money, considering that arrest and incarceration do not permanently extinguish the nuisance behaviors of derelicts.

- The most effective treatment of chronic inebriates begins with detoxification. Incentives must be created to encourage the police to use the detoxification center and to encourage Gateway Community Services, Inc. to provide adequate numbers of beds to accept those persons whose prognosis for rehabilitation is poor. Funding must be increased to accomplish this.

- The lack of effective programming and funding for the deinstitutionalized mentally ill population adds to the downtown derelict population.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

- Increased downtown development which brings people downtown should bring about displacement of the derelict population.

- Derelicts may be discouraged from inhabiting vacant buildings downtown if owners are required to securely board up doors and windows.

- Although the goal of downtown development and the need to provide services to derelicts are interrelated, the two need not compete against each other. There is no evidence to suggest that downtown development requires a reduction of services for derelicts, or, alternatively, that an improvement of services automatically harms the environment for downtown development. Conflict arises only when developers and service providers for derelicts want to use the same geographic area to accomplish their objectives. Location downtown is not as essential to service providers as it is to developers.

- It may be possible to reduce the impact of derelicts on the downtown image by arranging the location of services and attractions to minimize the movement of derelicts through the CCBD.

- Zoning represents a useful long-range tool for planning appropriate locations for all types of development.

- A determination of the most appropriate locations in or near downtown for missions, plasma centers and labor pools should take into consideration the possible disadvantages to downtown development, the populations most threatened or frightened by the presence of derelicts, the traffic patterns of derelicts, existing land use and zoning, and accessibility for the resident poor of Jacksonville who may require some of the same services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are the committee's specific suggestions for change, based on the findings and conclusions.

- Since development itself is a powerful tool to shift the derelict population away from the Commercial Central Business District (CCBD), the Downtown Development Authority should proceed with its plans for quality downtown development.
- In its long range downtown planning, the Downtown Development Authority and the City Planning Department should plan for service agencies and attractions to derelicts (missions, plasma centers, labor pools, and cheap bars) to be located outside the CCBD. All available tools should be used to accomplish this. These would include zoning, enforcement of sanitation and building codes, tax increment financing, and replacement of sub-standard structures with quality development when possible.
- The following criteria should be used in selecting appropriate locations for missions, plasma centers, and labor pools:
  - within easy access to I-95 and outside of the CCBD but convenient for the resident poor of Jacksonville;
  - on one side of, rather than surrounding the CCBD;
  - dispersed rather than clustered within the selected area, to avoid the development of a skid row;
  - away from senior citizen housing;
  - away from businesses employing large numbers of females;
  - away from the Springfield neighborhood.
- In all types of downtown development, the Downtown Develoment Authority and the City Planning Department should encourage the best use of landscaping, plantings, and building designs in order to discourage loitering. Any new or expanded mission buildings should incorporate such design factors to discourage loitering outside the buildings and include waiting areas for derelicts within the buildings.
- The City should enforce its existing ordinance requiring ownders of vacant buildings to securely board up windows, doors, and other possible entry points.
- The Downtown Development Authority and the City Planning Department should discourage further expansion of mission bed capacity for derelicts until a clear and convincing need is demonstrated. Needs assessment studies should examine the unmet demand for shelter (including families), the seasonal nature of this demand, the need for long term low cost accommodations for those seeking permanent employment in Jacksonville, and the need for shelter in non-urban areas.
- To diminish the attractiveness of Jacksonville to derelicts, and to preclude derelicts from "making the rounds," from mission to mission, the Downtown Development Authority should encourage the missions to maintain sufficient records and coordinate their services.
- A stronger effort should be made to aid derelicts to become productive members of society and to meet their immediate basic needs. Downtown business interests and appropriate representatives of city government should jointly explore the possibilities of providing daytime shelter (and programs) for derelicts who are unsuccessful in obtaining work.
- The Sheriff should initiate the use of highly visible foot patrols in the downtown area to create an atmosphere of safety and security for citizens.
- The Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, through the District Mental Health Board, should increase funding to allow for expanded capacity to serve the needs of chronic inebriates in the derelict population. This would probably require at least 65 beds for detoxification.
- Gateway Community Services should move away from a strict medical model with the expectations of curing all alcoholics. Instead a social control model should be implemented by making plans to accept the majority of public inebriates for detoxification with full acceptance of the fact that most will not go on to long term treatment, but are still deserving of immediate short-term care.
- The Sheriff should develop procedures to ensure that police take inebriates to the detoxification center rather than to jail (whenever space is available at the detoxification center).

- The Florida Legislature and other funding sources should increase the funding for community programs to reintegrate the deinstitutionalized mentally ill in community settings. If the mentally ill were provided with sufficient programs and activities, they would be less likely to be wandering on the downtown streets.

- Downtown retailers and the Chamber of Commerce should undertake a campaign to increase public awareness cf the relative harmlessness of derelicts. A part of this strategy should encourage citizens to turn down requests from panhandlers. Giving money to panhandlers is equivalent to supporting and encouraging their lifestyle.

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The JCCI study process relies upon information supplied by knowledgeable resource persons, in addition to published reference materials. We wish to thank the following persons, who made presentations to the committee, for their very valuable contributions to this study.

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COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND WORK

The full committee held 17 meetings from December 1981 through March 1982. A common data base was provided by resource persons who appeared before the committee and by staff research.

The management team held six meetings to direct the study process and to give guidance to staff.

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THE JACKSONVILLE COMMUNITY COUNCIL, INC.

The Jacksonville Community Council, Inc. (JCCI) was formed to anticipate, identify and address the complex issues of urban life. JCCI is a community-based nonpartisan, nonprofit organization providing the vehicle for in-depth, objective, citizen analysis of community problems and issues. It seeks broader community awareness and understanding of the issues and provides Jacksonville a diverse citizen forum reaching across the traditional dividing lines of a complex and diverse urban community.

The primary goal of JCCI is a better quality of life in Jacksonville through positive change. It has a short but impressive record for the quality, objectivity, clarity, and practicality of its studies of community problems, and its advocacy for the solutions it develops. Jacksonville has experienced the benefits of numerous improvements growing from these citizen studies.

Other JCCI goals grow largely from its focus on positive change. High on the list are the education and dialogue the studies themselves provide to participants. The work of JCCI strengthens citizen competence and awareness, provides for ongoing dialogue among diverse elements of the community, and serves as a catalyst for bringing together decision-makers.

JCCI is founded on a deep faith in the ability of citizens to set aside their differences and join together to learn and reason about problems of mutual concern. Its growth and success offer renewed hope for this basic democratic concept as a means of addressing the complex issues of modern urban communities.

JCCI receives funding from the United Way of Jacksonville, the City of Jacksonville, corporations, and individual members. Occasional grants have been obtained for specific projects or conferences.

The JCCI membership now exceeds 500 citizens representative of all parts of the Jacksonville community.

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Chairman GONZALEZ. We will proceed with our third and final panelist, Dr. Harvey Hilbert from Cleveland.

STATEMENT OF HARVEY HILBERT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RAINBEAU ASSOCIATES, COUNSELING AND RESEARCH CENTERS, SOUTH EUCLID, OH

Mr. HILBERT. Good afternoon, Mr. Gonzalez. Thank you for having me here to testify.

My name is Dr. Harvey Hilbert. I am an executive director of Rainbeau Associates Counseling and Research Centers which is located in South Euclid, OH, which is generally considered to be a suburb of Cleveland, OH.

I was a participant in the Ohio Department of Mental Health's recent study on homelessness in Ohio. It is a very comprehensive study of homelessness across the State and attempted to get demographic and descriptive information about homelessness in the State.

As a result of the study, we interviewed 978 homeless persons, person to person throughout the State. Prior to that, however, we did what was called a key informant survey. A key informant survey is something similar to what HUD was attempting to do in their study as I am learning from this experience this morning.

We tried to do a snowball sample where we called people who were considered experts in all of the municipalities, urban and rural throughout the State, and asked them questions about the homeless population in their area. We conducted a total of 146 such interviews statewide. In my region, which was the northeastern region of the State, I had responsibility for four counties, one of which was Cuyahoga County, which is the county that Cleveland is located in.

I interviewed 22 key informants in Cuyahoga County. These were representatives of law enforcement, Community Chest, religious organizations such as the Salvation Army, St. Herman's House of Charity, other homeless kinds of agencies, homeless coalitions and so forth, mental health boards and agencies, welfare childrens' services, cheap hotels, SRO operators, and others.

We did this again as I said in an attempt to find out what the experts in the area had to say about the homeless population in the area of Cleveland.

On January 1, 1984, I was called by a HUD researcher—I assumed it was a HUD researcher—and asked to participate in this survey that they were doing. It was at that point in time that I was in the middle of the key informant investigation phase of the Ohio study.

At that point—as a matter of fact, I had just completed that and had interviewed 22 key informants. I told the HUD investigator essentially that we had a very broad range of estimates in terms of the number of homeless persons, that the range was somewhere between 14,000 and 15,000 homeless people on any given night in the Cleveland area. At no time did the HUD investigator inform me that he was talking about something other than the metropolitan area of Cleveland, so I assumed that we were talking about the city of Cleveland or the metropolitan area, not this—whatever this is, RMA, Rand McNally thing. I didn't even know what that was to be quite honest.

As I told the investigator, our range was very wide. What we had to do in effect was discard the number because none of the experts seemed to give us a consistent answer. However, he pressed me for an estimate, so I took the mean of 2,000 and responded that probably on any given night, given the people I had interviewed, we could assume that there may be in the area of 2,000 homeless persons. He said "Thank you very much," completed the interview, and that was that.

I just this morning reviewed the instrument that this person had used, my interview instrument, and he has accurately recorded that I had informed him that there were 2,000 homeless people according to my estimate. He did not note that my estimate was an informed estimate based on 22 research interviews with key informants in the area. That is not noted on the form.

On item 4 of his instrument where it asks, "How did you arrive at this figure," the person has written in "no basis." Apparently he is saying here that I had no basis for knowing anything about homelessness in the area or that I had no basis for coming up with that estimate, and I take issue with that.

That concludes my testimony.

Chairman Gonzalez. Thank you very much, Dr. Hilbert.

I have some questions and then a mixture of questions that may be a statement, but first let me say that we are very grateful to you three—of course, some of you traveled a good distance to be here. I know Ms. Bell that it wasn't easy, but I think that your statement revealed that you feel a commitment, and for that I want to thank you, and also your willingness to be here with us.

Did I understand you correctly that after the questions were propounded, the interviews conducted, the results reported, there was a reworking of the figures?

Ms. Bell. No. The statement that I made was that once—we interviewed over several days, perhaps 2 weeks. For example, halfway into the first day of interviewing, if interviewers or respondents had a problem with wording of a question, they might go back at a meeting and change that around to make it more convenient or more understandable for the respondent if a number of interviewers were having this problem with the respondents.

Chairman Gonzalez. From your remarks as to the constant debate about the phrasing of the questions and the reworking of the questions, I would gather that this contractor didn't have any particular model of statistical analysis. What basic overall approach do you feel that this contractor was taking in meeting the responsibilities of the contract and the request specifically made by HUD?

Ms. Bell. Sir, I don't have any idea who wrote the questionnaire, whether it was HUD and they submitted it or whether it was Westat or it was a combination of the two. The two types of problems that I saw were additions where, for instance, vouchers were supposed to be focused on in a question after some of the questions had already been completed.

Chairman Gonzalez. I see.

Ms. **Bell**. Or, as I said, the inclusion—maybe a little bit different wording or changes in emphasis when respondents, particularly were having difficulty with it. There was one question, for instance, that we were initially instructed to figure out the amounts, I think it had something to do with bednights and how many people were there at various times. The original instructions were to take the time to figure out the figuring, the multiplication or whatever was necessary right during the interview. It was later changed to "let the respondent answer the question alone and write it down," and the coders, when the interview was finished, the people doing the coding would take care of adding, subtracting, multiplying or dividing.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. When we had the first review, we had witnesses from Phoenix who reported almost the same words as some of the witnesses this morning, saying, "We now see the HUD report, it is attributed to us in Phoenix, which is totally and radically different from what we told the individual asking the question."

I thought the interview had been conducted in person onsite and I found that it was a telephone interview, so that when you said—did you visit Galveston? Were you there or was this a telephone interview?

Ms. **Bell**. Westat's interviewing was done by telephone, and we have a copy of the questionnaire.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. I see.

In that specific example of Galveston that you gave us, you said that the official gave a rather high estimate.

Ms. **Bell**. Yes.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. And then how was that accepted by the contractor ultimately? Was it dismissed or was it reduced or do you recall?

Ms. **Bell**. I wouldn't know what happened to it after I turned in all the information, but he went on, as I said, I had several handwritten pages attached and he went on about—his figure was in the hundreds of thousands for Galveston and for the area that he was generally defining. His reasoning was that Galveston was about the last city before the Mexican border and what had happened was three-fold, it was the last city in that particular area. There had been a hurricane in 1983, so a lot of the shantytown and sort of borderline housing had been destroyed so that created an additional homeless population and a problem.

Second of all, a lot of people had been coming down from the Northern States and from the Midwestern States. These families included, children, people living in cars, who had lost homes, who had lost work and found themselves backed up at the Mexican border because there was no place else to go.

A lot stayed in this area, others went West to California; but his concept seemed to be, in this particular area, it was an overwhelming problem.

Once I filled out the questionnaire, I presume it was taken to coding. I must mention here that Westat, when the Jack Anderson article came out—which I would like to pick apart, I was misquoted and a number of other problems with that—but Westat contacted me by telephone and sort of went over the Anderson article and the person who called me, Brenda Simpson, asked—she had a questionnaire in front of her that—I couldn't identify it because obviously I couldn't see it and she said she thought that was the questionnaire, but there were no attachments to it.

That is the only thing I know about where that questionnaire might be now, and I am sure from that telephone conversation that they still have it.

Chairman GONZALEZ. The reason I seem to be dwelling on Galveston is in the first place Galveston is really out on an island, and so this official may have really been speaking of the great area, the Greater Houston metropolitan area because Houston would be closer in the Mexican border in the sense that it is further inland.

There is about a 50-mile stretch across the bay there and he must have been speaking of more than just Galveston, because Galveston is not particularly a large city, and it seemed to me though that it also reflected the fact that in this particular area, which we have called for years the golden crescent, because it has been a heavily active petrochemical area, but it has been in a depressed economic state for a few years.

They have a high rate of unemployment, so that with the people coming from out of State who tend to compound that problem and I can see where they would have what would appear to be an unusually high rate of homeless. But I think that those persons would push on.

The Mexican border hasn't attracted itself because that has been in a very depressed state of affairs since 1982, with about a 23-percent unemployment rate.

What you find then is that the tendency would be to go into the metropolitan areas where you begin to see this growing question of families without shelter. However, it would seem to me that there was some basic rationale in the approach that the particular company undertaking this contract was using, and I don't know—we would have to have some corporate manager to answer the question, but do you happen to know exactly what the parameters of the requested study by HUD as set forth by HUD were; that is, the range or area that HUD was particularly outlining for this contractor to work?

Ms. BELL. Well, it was the 60 cities, but as far as any of the arrangements made between HUD and Westat, I wouldn't have access to that.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Mr. McMurray, who is the staff director of the subcommittee, majority staff director, and Mr. Ruddy on my left is the minority staff director, and I tend to recognize them as a colleague sometimes, both, but Mr. McMurray points out that HUD and Westat used four separate terms or designations in defining geographical boundaries themselves of the survey. First, was the city. Second, was the RMA. Third, was the metropolitan areas as such, and the fourth, of course, was your traditional SMSA.

As I see it, you were sort of a ministerial employee. You were carrying out a particular function. You weren't dividing the policy that would result in the nature of the questions, the phrasing of the questions, the method used in propounding the questions, and given this very confusing definition of the very areas, I can see where you would really appear to have a very, very conflicting statistical count and one that with soberly and leisurely inspection wouldn't stand up unless you happened to have the specific definition.

For instance, when you contacted this official in Galveston, do you recall if he said he was a purely Galveston official or a Galveston-Houston area official?

Ms. **Bell.** I don't think it was defined that way. He had problems initially with the question which reads, "Now I would like to ask you about the general situation concerning the homeless in the whole metropolitan area, not just those in your shelter." As interviewers, we cannot lead the respondents or coach them, we have to take down verbatim what they say.

If a respondent had a problem with defining the area, the only thing we could do was read them the following definition.

"Metropolitan area: The city as well as all the surrounding counties in the SMSA," and that had to be a direct quote.

We were told that they would understand what an SMSA was. If they still had problems with it, they had to define it for themselves, and if they didn't define it, we just put down what they had said.

Chairman **Gonzalez.** You have no knowledge or experience of having been directed to dilute, reduce, or in any way try to foretell a given statistical result or change or modify a count?

Ms. **Bell.** No; not at all.

Chairman **Gonzalez.** OK.

Well, thank you very much, Ms. Bell. I really am grateful to you.

Ms. Chambers, I really welcome your testimony because I think it is very representative of what we roughly call the Sun Belt, and it certainly—you could be speaking for the greater San Antonio ministerial alliance or the committee on the homeless. You found that when you—I think you said for the first time this morning you saw the HUD report and you found a definite conflict between what you thought you had reported and what HUD report?

Ms. **Chambers.** Not a conflict—I guess in how they used it and that was mostly a definitional thing whereas our problem was not—the problem we identified was not homelessness but the downtown derelict population. I still haven't seen the HUD report, apparently they used that information to extrapolate to the homeless population and they are not the same.

For example, the downtown derelict population—80 percent of them would be in the downtown area or on the fringes of the downtown area. They would not be in the suburbs by and large, so you couldn't expect to find the same numbers in the suburbs. On the other hand, the families wouldn't be counted as part of that downtown derelict population.

It is an apples and oranges situation and they apparently didn't understand that about our study.

Chairman **Gonzalez.** They came out with bananas almost.

Do you happen to know to what extent, if any, the city of Jacksonville makes use of community development block grant funds or has had access to the national FEMA fund for the homeless?

Ms. **Chambers.** Yes; they do use the community block grant funds extensively.

Chairman **Gonzalez.** They do?

Ms. Chambers. Through the United Way, they have administered some of the FEMA funds.

Chairman Gonzalez. I see. OK.

Dr. Hilbert, in your estimate, I believe, of 2,000, when the question was asked of you, was it clear in your mind that they were asking for your estimate for the city of Cleveland, the greater metropolitan area of Cleveland or do you recall?

Mr. Hilbert. As I recall, the person asked about Cleveland. I assumed he was talking about the Cleveland area, meaning downtown Cleveland and surrounding areas. However, as I was looking at this report or the testimony earlier, the written report, the testimony earlier, I noticed that according to their criteria that they were using, Cleveland has eight counties in it. I was not aware that Cleveland had eight counties, so we were apparently talking about two different things although I was not aware of it.

Chairman Gonzalez. So, that when you gave that estimate of 2,000, you were speaking of what precisely?

Mr. Hilbert. I was speaking of the general Cleveland area.

Chairman Gonzalez. Cleveland and the suburbs?

Mr. Hilbert. Right.

Chairman Gonzalez. Well, thank you again each and every one of you. You may wish to stay—ordinarily, in fact, invariably, when we have field hearings, when we have finished with the formal list of witnesses, usually what I do is say to those persons present, we will have time for the public sector. If any of you have questions or wish to make a statement, we will recognize you. This morning we have present Mr. Mitch Snyder, who, of course, now is inexorably associated with the question of homelessness and who appeared before us when we had our first hearing on the overview of the HUD report.

Now, if the three witnesses wish to leave now, certainly you are excused at this moment with our profound thanks and gratitude. The fact is that both on the minority and the majority side there will be some members submitting questions in writing. They will be given to you in time for you to respond after you receive the transcript of these proceedings. You will get a transcript of exactly what transpired, your words, and the questions asked of you.

Some of the members who weren't able to be here this morning will unquestionably want to submit some questions, of course, assuming that will be in time for you to have that transcript before you and you can, of course, modify, correct the transcript and that is the reason we send it to you.

So, we have reserved for the sake of those who weren't able to be here the right for them to submit these questions and you may expect some in writing.

Thank you very much.

Do you have a statement?

Mr. Hilbert. Yes, sir; I would like to add something.

In response to some of the earlier discussion, I have noticed that a lot of people seem to be talking about numerical counts in terms of numbers of beds and shelters in order to get an estimate of homelessness. I would like to say that as a researcher and part of the Ohio group of researchers that did this statewide study, we struggled also with that issue. We wanted to expand our study of homeless persons beyond a shelter study.

I would like to say that we were, I believe, successful in accomplishing that. Only one-third of our 987 or whatever it is—78 homeless persons were in shelters. All of the rest of these people were interviewed on street corners, underneath bridges, in abandoned buildings, in cars, jails, emergency rooms, all over the place.

So, I would think it would be a gross error to assume that if you get a count of the number of beds in a shelter that you are getting even a reasonable account of the number of homeless persons in any given area, because homelessness is a much broader phenomenon than simply a shelter phenomenon.

Thank you.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Thank you, Dr. Hilbert. I appreciate those remarks and thank you all.

At this point I would recognize Mr. Snyder and also subsequently any other person here attending the hearings who may wish to ask a question or make a short statement will certainly recognize the public area for that purpose.

Mr. Snyder, thank you very much and we don't intend to forget about our situation in the Nation's Capital. As you recall, and I think the record ought to reflect, that I believe it was in August, we had a joint hearing with a subcommittee of the Public Works Committee to discuss the question about what if anything could be done at that particular and critical moment about the Nation's Capital's shelter which Mr. Snyder and the Community for Creative Nonviolence——

Mr. SNYDER. I had a judge say "I am Mitch Snyder from the Community of Non-Creative Violence."

Chairman GONZALEZ. I wouldn't make that mistake because I believe you have been not only creative, but inspiring. I do want the record to show that we did have a joint hearing of both the Public Works Subcommittee and this one. I am sorry to say that by the time we did meet, the die was cast and we couldn't convince the administration to do something about redeeming the President's pledge which was very definite about a week before the election last year, so that we intend to come back and review the shelter or lack of shelter program in the Nation's Capital. We will be calling on you again as we have in the past.

We recognize you at this time, Mr. Snyder, for your statement.

STATEMENT OF MITCH SNYDER, COMMUNITY FOR CREATIVE NONVIOLENCE

Mr. SNYDER. Thank you,

I just computed that I spent about the last 20 months, probably maybe 10,000 hours, trying to help people understand what the HUD report is all about and what was done to cover up what was done in the HUD report.

Now, I am a pretty bright guy. The guy over there calls me canny. That is true. I don't spend 20 months for nothing.

Why did I do that? Because that little report and that number are killing people right now.

We have just hit the winter on the east coast. Other parts of the country are already into it. People are going to die this winter if that report does not fall. If that report continues to be referred to every time there is a newspaper article or a radio story or a television story about how many homeless people there are in America, as long as Americans can go to bed at night believing that there may be as few as a quarter of a million people on the streets because their Government told them so, that kills people.

Kathleen Peroff lied to you, Mr. Gonzalez. She lied to a Federal judge. She committed perjury in the process and she violated Federal law in lying to you because you cannot lie to Congress.

If you file a written and knowingly falsified document with any Government agency, it is a Federal offense now. It does not have to be under penalty of perjury. That is what our lawyers tell us and I bet you they are right.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Excuse me. I think the record ought to reflect—is it not a fact that you went to court as a result of the HUD report?

Mr. SNYDER. We filed a civil suit and in the course of that civil suit Kathleen Peroff filed a statement, a sworn statement that was perjured. It was knowingly perjured. The testimony that you heard today irrefutably says Kathleen Peroff lied to a Federal judge under oath.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Would you mind identifying Kathleen Peroff?

Mr. SNYDER. Kathleen Peroff was the project director for this study. She was at the time the Assistant Director of Policy Planning—was that it? She is now over at OMB. She and Assistant Secretary June Koch filed knowingly falsified statements with individual Members of Congress and with this committee.

They have committed Federal offenses in covering up a report that is so fraudulent and so heinous in what it attempted to do that when they got caught last May right before the election, they did exactly what they did in Watergate. So now referring to this as a haggle over numbers is like referring to Watergate as political high jinks. It just is not. It is criminal offenses.

I am asking you to bring Kathleen Peroff before you under subpoena to answer questions that must be answered if this Nation is to understand once and for all that that report is fraudulent, that it knowingly cooked numbers and that people conducted a criminal conspiracy to cover that up.

America has the right to know that. This committee has an absolute responsibility not to bring the Secretary in to explain what wonderful things they are doing for the homeless and how the block grant funds are available. We don't need another debate like that because we already know what he is going to say and we already know what you all are going to say and we also know people are going to continue to die while the debate rages on.

As a Christmas present to America—and particularly to the homeless of America—you must all, by yourselves, if necessary as chairman of this subcommittee, take down that report. Don't let anybody tell you that those numbers don't mean a thing or that they are unimportant or that we now need to move on from there. There is no moving on from there as long as that number continues to appear in every article, in every story talking about the homelessness in America.

Legislators, city officials, church officials, and concerned citizens are going to believe that the magnitude of the problem is small when, in fact, it is national and disastrous in its dimensions.

The Federal Government knowingly spent $138,000 to make homeless people disappear. Somebody sat in a room with Kathleen Peroff and June Koch and I demand to know who. As an American citizen, I demand to know who sat in that room and decided to cook numbers and take away from homeless people the only thing they have left which is their existence.

They have tried to deny them statistical existence by knowingly cooking numbers and then when they got caught they lied to a judge and they lied to you. Now it is not enough to bring Government officials in here to tell you what they intend to do about the homeless. You know what they intend to do with the homeless and so do I.

If they could put them in wagons and attach hoses and kill them, I swear to you they would do it. It is that kind of mentality that I believe we are dealing with.

So to bring them in here and ask them what they intend to do is ludicrous. We have a right to bring them in here and to demand that they be accountable to the American people for the dollars they spent to defraud the American people. Then they lied to a Federal judge and lied to you. We have a right to have them brought before you.

We went to the U.S. attorney and we said, these people have committed these Federal offenses. Here they are. We have all these witnesses, all this testimony.

We want you to conduct an investigation. It was unfortunate that the U.S. attorney was and still is representing HUD in this case, including in our effort to get them thrown off the case, in the court of appeals. They are representing people that we claim have committed crimes. Now they say, "We don't want to investigate because we don't think our clients have done anything wrong."

Could a lawyer walk into a court and represent both sides? Yet the U.S. attorney, the only prosecutor in this damn country that we can go to, has said, sorry, we are not going to investigate these criminal offenses because they are our clients and we think they are nice folks.

Now, you are the court of last resort. If you don't do what the U.S. attorney failed to do before the grand jury, which was to bring in Kathleen Peroff and to bring in Koch and to sit them down and say I want to know who sat in the room when you decided that you were going to use the RMA, a commercial designation that a guy who has got 20 years experience and that is considered one of the leading experts in the country has never even heard of, I want to know who was in that room when that decision was made.

You could say, I want you to come before me next week and I want you to explain what you did in that room. Then I want to know who sat in the room and who decided to do this crummy report in the first place because there was lots of talk, if you look at the record, of a different kind of report, verifying the number of shelter beds available.

Somewhere a decision was made to issue a report that is purely political, that cooks numbers, and that is fraudulent. I want to know who sat in the room and made the decision.

You have to know that. You are the committee that sits on top of that agency. We come to you and say these people lied to you before, they lied to a judge, they are lying to America, and we are claiming bodies and body bags every damn day now because those numbers are hanging there in the air.

They are reducing everybody's sense of urgency while everybody says they are unimportant. I am telling you, Mr. Gonzalez, as someone who has spent a lot of years trying to deal with this problem and who probably understands it better than any human being in this Nation, I believe, with the exception of people who are long-term homeless on the streets themselves, I am telling you that report is the most dangerous thing that this administration has done outside of its nuclear policies.

I believe that it is the most heinous, manipulative, psychologically destructive thing. They are playing right into the desire of America to believe it is a little problem because it is so big it is making everybody crazy and they don't know what to do about it. It is that big and the Government—in saying it is really not that big—is playing into our desire to stick our head back down in the sand.

You have got to call them to account. You have got to bring them before you and you have got to do it soon.

For the rest of the winter people are going to be dying all over the place. Please bring Kathleen Peroff and bring Assistant Secretary Koch before you and ask them to answer the kind of questions that now exist. The testimony you heard today—they told you there were 40 calls made to New York—they lied to you.

They told you they had a certain number of estimates. They lied to you.

They lied to you and they lied to a judge. They committed crimes. It is nothing more or less than Watergate, Rita LaVelle. If it was not homeless people we were talking about in this study, if it were almost anything but, if it were cars being imported or exported or the exchange rate between the yen and the dollar, every decimal point would be accounted for, yet I have heard members of this committee sit here this morning and say it is merely a haggle over numbers.

No; it is not that. It is life and death. That report must be withdrawn. This administration has told us, we have had White House officials tell us—we will not withdraw this report. The only way this report will be withdrawn is if it is exposed as the fraud that it is and the criminal conspiracy that was conducted to cover it up is also exposed.

We are out of time. It is winter. It is cold. The first person died in Washington a day ago. They found him at 15th and K frozen to death, a man in his sixties. That report is responsible for a piece of that death. It is going to be responsible for a lot of other deaths. It may seem innocuous, but it is not innocuous. You have to believe me when I tell you that and I am speaking on behalf of thousands of people who struggle like we do to meet the needs of folks who are out there languishing on the streets.

Please forget about the political discussion which is important and nice. Bring all those officials in and let them tell you what they intend to do or not do with homeless people as policy. But, please, Mr. Gonzalez, make them come back and make them tell you what they did and didn't do and make them explain why they lied to you and why they lied under oath because the American people have a right to that.

The U.S. attorney has said no. The U.S. attorney works for the administration that has done this in the first place. If not you, who?

If not now, when? Ten thousand bodies later? We can't do that. You have an opportunity right now to say to this Nation in a way that no national figure has yet done, homeless people are so important that we are going to make sure that this Government does not lie about their number and does not issue fraudulent reports because if they do, if no one else is willing to drag them back and make them tell the truth under oath, I will.

We need you to do that because nobody else is willing to do that and if you don't do that, that number is going to dangle there, that 250,000 number is going to hang in mid air like a guillotine waiting to come down and lop off the heads of the poor folks out on the streets.

That is what it is all about. We need you. We need you to deal with it in that way. We need you to deal with it like it is a serious criminal offense conducted at the highest levels, which it is.

I bet you it goes beyond HUD. I bet you anything. We have a right to know that. When we talked about political shenanigans, it became a national scandal and the President walked out of office ultimately. These are homeless people. We need to deal with them as if they were important and we need to deal with the study as if it were important, so I am begging you, I am praying you will do the right thing.

You have got testimony in here that is devastating. They didn't even bother to come in.

Why? Because they know the moment they come in they are in trouble. Please, bring them in. They are not going to come willingly. They know what is facing them. They know what they have done. They know who they lied to. They know what crimes they have committed.

I have invited them a dozen times in the last 3 months to sue me for defamation because I have accused named individuals of perjury and other criminal offenses. Why haven't they sued me? Because they are perjurers and they have committed criminal offenses and they are walking scot free and the real rub, you know they have got this nice poster for celebrating the year of homeless next year as declared by the United Nations. The person in charge of America's participation, June Koch, who cooked the numbers to deny those people their existence. They have now put her in charge of America's observance of the Year of the Homeless. Make her come in here, make her tell you the truth under oath.

If she doesn't, then you can join us in demanding that the U.S. attorney prosecute because they have already committed criminal offenses. If they come back and lie again, they will commit more.

Only you have got enough information now and we have got enough lawyers for you to be able to know the questions that need to be asked and them to have to answer them. That is all I have to say and that is what I am asking you. I am begging you to do this as a Christmas present to this Nation.

Please raise the homeless up by making this administration admit what they have done under oath and suffer the consequences for it. Don't allow them to steal from these people the only thing, the only damn thing they have got left which is their mere existence. If you take away from them the statement that "I am," what have you got? You have got nothing and no administration has the right to do that to human beings that number in the millions just so they can walk away with a couple more nickels in their pockets to be able to spend on toilet seats and hammers.

That just ain't fair. It ain't legal. It ain't reasonable and it certainly isn't human and it ain't Christmas, I will tell you that.

So, please, do that for us and do that for the folks out there because they need somebody to demand accountability of these people. Otherwise, they are going to continue to walk on the broken bodies of those folks scot free with complete arrogance. I am just tired of that and I am tired of watching people die while those numbers hang up there and if they say, well, everybody in Washington knows the report is discredited, not everybody in America lives in Washington. There are a lot of people across this Nation that are paying attention to those numbers and those numbers are false, they are phony and the crimes that were committed to cover that up need to be exposed, and it is you, there is no one else.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Let me say this. First, thank you for taking your time being with us here again. It would be impossible to accede to your request.

You actually made two requests, or three, the reason being not any lack of this position on my part. The reason is the actual limitations that are inherent in a Member of Congress generally and it would be a fraud for me to pretend that one, that I could do it.

First, you yourself stated time is long gone by for action. We have had hearings. The reason we have this hearing—certainly I am like you. We don't have time to waste 1 minute and we don't have the budget in the subcommittee to have hearings beyond a certain number.

But we have them because we consider that that report needed to be scrutinized and we did that beginning about 2 months after it had been released in the month of May, as you recall. I think it was very definitely established then that it was a faulty report.

However, we also realize the truth of your statement that it is referred to. It has been used as a sort of argument to do nothing in an effective and realistic way about this problem.

On the other hand, it would do no good at this point to summon forth a person who has already by her own testimony been rebutted by the experts. As you will recall, in May that year we had Dr. Appelbaum and he since then has had a year or better to evaluate these statistics and the actual facts that have occurred in the interim time.

That is why he was here this morning. I think that as far as revealing the lack of validity of that report, that has been done.

The question is what profit would there be? Suppose that I could have the power to demand that Ms. Peroff come here.

Mr. **Snyder**. She is a criminal.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. I know, but if you yourself admit that a court of competent jurisdiction wouldn't do anything about perjury——

Mr. **Snyder**. No, the U.S. attorney. The court has never dealt with the question of perjury. It has to go through the U.S. attorney.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. The issue of perjury is something that can be brought to the attention of the court by anybody. It would be a question of his initiative that could do something but that is a court of competent jurisdiction.

We are only one of three branches, coordinate, equal, independent and separate. So that even our own investigatory authority is limited—this is an investigatory hearing under the general provisos of the rules of the House and the area of jurisdiction assigned to this committee by the rules of the House. So that if we were to bring in Ms. Peroff—and I could compel her to be here, and we found her guilty, and we hung her and strung her up and burned her in oil, how have we done anything to——

Mr. **Snyder**. When Ms. Peroff falls and when Ms. Cook falls and probably when Mr. Pierce falls, so does the report. They are intrinsically bound. The administration has made them one.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. My opinion is that they have and the reaction I have had from the academic as well as the organization and individuals that have anything to do, whether it is market financing or economic studies or economic analysts, they are not going on any kind of a validity given that study.

Mr. **Snyder**. But others are. I go across the country and I speak to people.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. Our task here is not to prove and disprove except as it yields to our persuading our colleagues first on the subcommittee, then on the full committee, then in the House to have some kind of consensus as to what we can do now legislatively.

Now, you will recall that it was this subcommittee that had a more practical and an immediate impact on helping in persuading GSA to open up the facility at the old Federal City College in December about 2 years ago, 1983, if I remember. Remember the foot dragging?

Mr. **Snyder**. Sure.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. We had written letters back and forth in November so there was a good and immediate reason why we could have a hearing, bring about attention and thereby produce some given result. I can't see that we can do that at this point by bringing witnesses and disproving their——

Mr. **Snyder**. You can say that. You can sit here and say the American citizen does not have a right to know that high ranking Federal officials have committed felonies for which they can be indicted and imprisoned and for which the U.S. attorney, which is working for the same administration, will not investigate or prosecute. Why were there Watergate hearings? Why?

Chairman **Gonzalez**. Mr. Snyder, it is not our function to evaluate criminal culpability.

Mr. **Snyder**. Why were there Watergate hearings?" That is exactly what they did. Rita LaVelle was dragged before the committee kicking and screaming.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. In Watergate there was definite culpability. Any culpability of a criminal nature is referred to the Justice Department. It wasn't the committee that followed through on that. The committee was evaluating one, the constitutional separation of powers, the failure of the executive branch to live up to its oath of office and the like.

What I am telling you here is that there isn't anything I wouldn't do if I could bring about some—one, a helpful and immediately remedial answer to the question in the Nation's Capital, which I consider to be very, very serious and immediate, and then bring about an approval over on the other side, because the House has approved our bill, of that section plus the added sections that we have, recognizing the need for a grant or a special area concerning the mentally ill who happen to be homeless.

If we can get that, we will be doing about all we can really do from a legislative standpoint to help you.

Mr. **Snyder**. That is not true at all.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. That is the truth.

Mr. **Snyder**. Once again, we have people telling us what they can do and not paying a damn bit of attention to what we tell them you can do. You are not listening to us. I like you. You are my friend. You are probably the best person up here on the hill as far as integrity. You are not listening to us.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. You are right there. I am right here, and I am listening to you.

Mr. **Snyder**. You are not hearing me. We need to have Federal officials held to the same degree of accountability that they would be if we were talking about imported cars. Rita Lavelle was dragged in front of you all.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. That is why we have had hearings and continue to have hearings.

Mr. **Snyder**. Without HUD.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. I don't know.

Mr. **Snyder**. I do. I wouldn't have come in here having committed felonies either.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. At this point, it is my position to accept the HUD administration's answer to our question to send a witness. It may not be, and they may be responsive on the next round when we will be having a definite reason to call forth a specific witness from HUD.

Now, if we don't get that and it is necessary for the purpose of completing the oversight of that study, then we will reach that point. Now, I can't unilaterally issue a subpoena. Under the rules, we don't have that power. I wanted to clarify that. I don't want you to think I have it in my power to do something I know I can't.

If I tell you, yes, I can do it, I would like to, you don't want me to lie to you, but you can't say, and the record ought not to show that I haven't listened to you either.

Mr. **Snyder**. You can do what I am asking you to do. You can, and you and I both know if you felt compelled, you could, as a subcommittee chair, working it through with your committee members, bring someone in on very short notice on a subpoena to testify, and I am simply saying if it were almost any other set of comparable circumstances, they would be dragged in here kicking and screaming.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. Let me point out something you just said. I cannot unilaterally issue a subpoena. I have got to convene and get the majority, and if I remember correctly, the rules changed about 10 years ago. Yes, it would be possible for the subcommittee, not necessarily the full committee as it used to be, but I would have to get the majority to go along, and then I would have to explain and give a very potent reason why that should be done immediately.

Mr. **Snyder**. I understand.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. I must point that out to you and also correct your statement because it just isn't accurate, if I wanted to I could singlehandedly do this.

Mr. **Snyder**. I know you can't singlehandedly do it, but I also know you have the respect of the committee. If you felt so strongly about this, and you don't—that is why I say you are not hearing me. I know you feel strongly enough to have a second hearing.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. Respect is one thing, Mitch, the votes are something else.

Mr. **Snyder**. I know. Mr. Gonzalez, people are walking around Washington right now, high ranking Government officials, that have committed crimes, and they are snubbing their nose at everyone and if it was any other subject but homeless people, these folks would be facing the guillotine right now. There is nowhere for us to go. The U.S. attorney who is representing these same people refuses to investigate.

We have asked the court of appeals to decide a question that they have never answered before, and that is that the U.S. attorney has an obligation to prosecute over and above an obligation to represent HUD. That question hasn't even been answered by the court of appeals. We are sitting here knowing that crimes have been committed, why they have been committed, and absolutely nobody in the city of Washington that we can find is willing or able or any combination of the two to really deal with that.

I must surmise that if it was anything other than homeless people, there would be a lot more happening because they issued a fraudulent report, and then conducted a criminal conspiracy. Rita Lavelle did that, and got burned, Watergate was that and that is what happened, and this is pending now for a year and a half and everybody is saying we have got to move beyond this point.

Chairman **Gonzalez**. I agree, Mitch. I agree with what you are saying. I don't disagree. What I am trying to point out to you realistically is the limitations on this level of what can be done to bring to the bar of accountability the individuals that you say are criminally culpable of perjury and other crimes. But also you must understand that certainly the President is publicly accountable. He was running for reelection a year ago, but this awareness——

Mr. **Snyder**. I am talking about legal accountability. I want to take it out of political accountability.

Chairman GONZALEZ. When we first brought up the Vento amendment to our Housing Authorization Act of 1983, we had one devil of a time getting the authorization figure, then one devil of a time getting the appropriation. Why? Because this is a good mirror. The people that are representative and chosen representative of the people, I think, are a good mirror. There is no generalized perception yet about this problem.

I believe it was Ms. Chambers who was referring to 1981, and she said well nobody at that time thought in terms of anybody being homeless in America. That is true. The perceptions are all important. I agree with you that what we do we do? Do we wait until we have—we don't have to go to Calcutta to see people dying on the streets? That is what I have said. But we have to also recognize that we must proceed in that which is absolutely possible within our system at this time. I have confidence that it will be, but we can't give up.

We have to keep struggling. I don't want to leave this hearing with the impression that I have an inherent power that I know I don't have. God in heaven knows—Mitch, God in heaven knows I don't have that power; neither you and I would be here. We would be somewhere else doing something, and would have done something long ago.

Mr. SNYDER. No one has the power? Don't you understand what you are telling me? You can't tell me that. You can't say that, and I can't let you say it. You can't tell me you just said essentially.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Don't misinterpret us.

Mr. SNYDER. There is nowhere else for us to go.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Let me interrupt you. I am saying if we had a system in which I was invested with a certain power that you are asking me to exercise, it would be different.

Mr. SNYDER. I understand.

Chairman GONZALEZ. I am trying to explain to you I cannot accede to your demands at the moment, not because I don't want to, but because I just can't inherently have that power, and I know it and you know it.

Mr. SNYDER. What I am asking you to do is ask the committee to issue a subpoena to get an honest answer and determine whether the report is totally fraudulent or not.

Chairman GONZALEZ. As I told Mr. Frank, if we come to that point we will. At this point, I cannot make that binding commitment.

Mr. SNYDER. I understand you can't. I am just asking you to please do it or do what you have to do or can do to make it happen.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Can I ask you a question before you leave, because we have extended here. What is the situation with respect to the shelter on Second Street?

Mr. SNYDER. They are still trying to throw us out, and we are trying to stay there. We had 650 people last night. The court of appeals said until or unless they rule we are not going anywhere.

Chairman GONZALEZ. How many people did you have last night?

Mr. SNYDER. Last night we had 640. Of that, there were 87 women and 3 children, all of whom would be out on the street if the shelter were closed. The same administration that issued the report and lied about it is trying to throw us out in the street after the President promised to fix up a building. They are just getting away with everything in sight.

I am amazed. Sometimes I feel like we are the only bulwark at least in this area against those maniacs. They are putting the full court press against this country trying to crush everything dark-skinned or poor in sight, and the homeless are a perfect example, and we are begging for justice and there is only so much we can do.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Join the club. It has been very lonely here for 4½ years.

Mr. SNYDER. We have got to work together, then, to stop these people from lying to you and lying to us.

Chairman GONZALEZ. I have. I have been with you and I think I have been with you when it counted.

Mr. SNYDER. All I am asking you to do is please try to get the committee to quickly bring at least Kathleen Peroff in.

Chairman GONZALEZ. We are trying to do that. Now, how quickly is something I cannot tell you at this moment for sure, but that is where we are headed.

One further question here: what actual efforts will be made or are you in danger of seeing that they are made to physically eject you from this shelter?

Mr. SNYDER. They can't physically eject us unless and until the court of appeals tells them we have done nothing. Contrary to Government statements, we have done absolutely nothing in the last 3 months to fortify our building. We are not armed. We didn't go to Geneva. It ain't us that has the stockpile. We are not the people that believe in bombs and bullets. We keep saying we have got the greatest weapon of all, and that is God, and that is going to take everybody down if necessary, but even God seems to be having a rough time against these HUD officials, and this HUD report I am telling you.

It has been a year and a half now, and I have visions of God up there panting saying, "What the hell is wrong with the human beings? How much more do you need to know?"

Chairman GONZALEZ. I want to thank you again, Mr. Snyder, and again say that, of course, if there is anything I as an individual can do, I certainly intend to as an individual. As a chairman of the subcommittee, I have to defer my judgment to many others, and try to obtain a consensus, which is the way it should be, but what I have told you all through the years, and I think if you review in your mind you will see that when the occasion arose, I was there.

Mr. SNYDER. This is true. I'm serious. I wouldn't be sitting here saying this if I thought there wasn't a remote possibility even that you would do what needs to be done. I believe that if you understand clearly what has happened, if you understand what they have done, the moment that you fully understand exactly what these folks have done and the importance of it, I believe that you will do what needs to be done.

Chairman GONZALEZ. I do understand. I have—I suspend judgment all the time. I did not want to get into a numbers controversy, and then personalize it and get into a political discussion where I would be accused of political partisanship and trying to embarrass the administration. But I can count. I can add up. I have heard witnesses.

The first batch of witnesses we heard in May 1984 settled it as far as I was concerned. We had the persons here that had been reported, and they were coming here to repudiate that. That was more significant to me than anything else.

Mr. SNYDER. I agree.

Chairman GONZALEZ. On the other hand, when I do form a judgment, then the question is what can we do about it from this level. What is feasible? What is possible, not what is desirable. We know what is desirable, but what is feasible, what is possible?

Mr. SNYDER. You know, and I know that certain Federal officials have lied under oath, you know. You just said you have heard it. I have heard it. The question is where do we go from here and the answer that keeps coming back not just from you, but from everyone essentially is nowhere.

That is an unacceptable answer because people who are on the Government payroll at the highest levels have committed crimes just like they went out and picked a pocket or raped somebody. They committed crimes.

Now if a high ranking Federal official had raped someone, it would obviously be a different discussion except that is exactly what they did. They raped someone. They committed other crimes, perjury and uttering false statements and conspiracy and all the rest, but they committed those same kinds of crimes, and they, in fact, raped a whole group of people. But everybody is saying essentially that beyond a certain point it doesn't seem to be anything we can do about that, and I am saying we have to move beyond that.

Chairman GONZALEZ. No, no. I think that is the wrong conclusion on your part. I don't think that I interpret what members were saying this morning—"Well, look there is nothing we can do about this." I think what I heard was, "Well, look, if we are in agreement that there is a problem, regardless of the numbers, then let's do something about it."

Mr. SNYDER. Right that's it. The "regardless of the numbers" is the dilemma, see?

Chairman GONZALEZ. My job is to try to say this is what we can do about it. If bringing forth these individuals will help us do that, we will do it, sir. That is what I want to say.

Mr. SNYDER. Just understand it is not regardless of the numbers. The numbers are so central that they are like a little pitch fork that they are shoving in the chest of people. Those numbers are critical.

Chairman GONZALEZ. What I am saying is even if you do, we still have the question of the will of eliciting—the will to do something about it.

Mr. SNYDER. I understand.

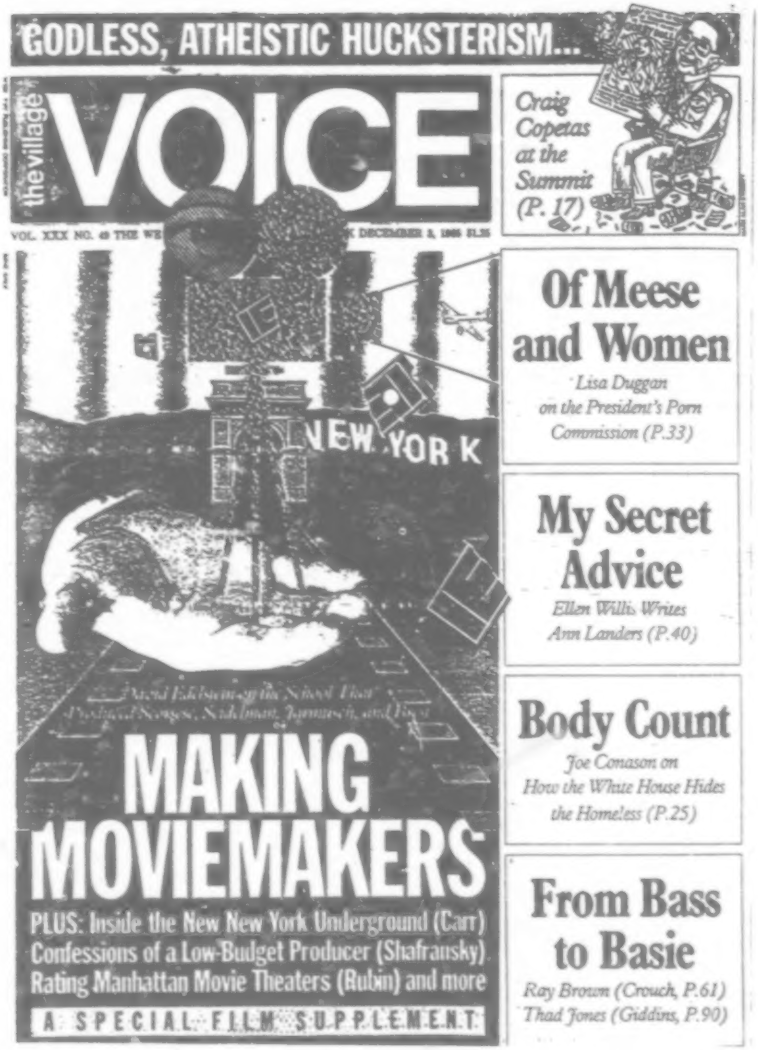
Chairman GONZALEZ. In any event, thank you again, and we will be in communication with you. We will have, with respect to these, a continuing series of hearings on homelessness, one that will specifically address the question of Washington, DC. So you will be hearing from us.

Mr. SNYDER. OK. Thank you.

Chairman GONZALEZ. Is there any other person present who wishes to make a statement for the record or direct a question for the record? If not, the subcommittee stands adjourned until the call of the Chair.

[Whereupon, at 1:15 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned subject to the call of the Chair.]

APPENDIX



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"The Village Voice", New York, December 3, 1985

Body Count

How the Reagan Administration Hides the Homeless

By Joe Conason

Cold weather is coming, and the streets of American cities are decorated for the holiday season with homeless people and their meager belongings. Shoppers often feel affronted by the sight of the homeless. Most stare straight ahead; a few make gestures of contempt. Our unspoken desire is for these spectral presences, these Dickensian ghosts, to disappear.

In its way, the Reagan administration has acted on that wish. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has tried to make the homeless vanish with numerical sorcery. During the winter of 1984, HUD undertook a $138,000 study designed to refute the claim by advocates of the homeless, in particular Washington's Community for Creative Nonviolence (CCNV), that over two million Americans have no place to live. CCNV spokesman Mitch Snyder has become one of America's most visible and relentless advocates for the homeless (see sidebar), and until HUD released its findings in May 1984, Snyder's two-million figure was widely accepted as a rough estimate.

The HUD findings, published as *A Report to the Secretary on the Homeless and Emergency Shelters*, stated that probably no more than a quarter of a million Americans were homeless on any winter night last year. The report immediately provoked charges of fraud and deception. Snyder, joined by other homeless advocates, sued in Federal court to stop distribution of the report. That suit was summarily dismissed, but an appeal is still pending.

Last week, after waiting six months for HUD to respond fully to his requests for data underlying the report, Snyder filed another action to force the agency to surrender more documents. But the hunt for hidden information is only one more step toward his ultimate goal. Assisted by volunteer counsel Terry F. Lenzner (formerly of the Senate Watergate Committee staff) and James H. Rowe III, Snyder is seeking a grand jury investigation of at least two administration officials on charges of criminal perjury and conspiracy.

Snyder and his co-workers in CCNV have worked with street dwellers for more than 10 years. Snyder's frequent dealings with the federal government, as well as the local bureaucracy, have added considerable political experience to his street wisdom, and he is convinced the report's conclusions were a predetermined attempt to "deprive the homeless of the only thing they have: their existence." HUD's claim that there are far fewer homeless than previously believed, he says, is meant to ease pressure for federal relief. The homeless, after all, are not simply an affront to other Americans; they are also a living rebuke to the "success" of the president's economic program.

HUD Secretary Samuel R. Pierce Jr.

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When HUD's *Report to the Secretary* was released, it was front-page news. Its assessment that there were only 250,000 to 350 000 homeless persons seemed to justify Reagan administration policy, which regarded these people as a problem for the states, localities, and private sector—not the federal government. This view is reflected in the skewed funding of homeless programs: over the past three years, the Reagan budgets have allocated a total of $218 million—about the same amount that New York City spends on its homeless in a single year (see box).

On the frontlines of opposition to the Reagan policy stands CCNV, which along with local officials and other homeless advocates insists that only federal resources can provide adequate food and shelter. For more than a decade, CCNV has cared for the capital's homeless with a combination of donated goods, hip ingenuity, and a defiant, prophetic activism. While local communities including Washington were still ignoring the growing numbers on the streets and in shelters a few years ago, CCNV activists went public with hunger strikes and other actions intended to penetrate public apathy. Snyder's style doesn't charm everyone in official Washington. Some politicians and pundits are offended by his bold challenge to authority, accompanied by caustic remarks about our "little Western minds that have to quantify everything in sight, whether we can or not."

But in 1982 Snyder did try to count, admittedly unscientifically, the ranks of homeless Americans by calling shelter providers in other cities and projecting their estimates nationally. From that telephone survey came the figure Snyder used in congressional testimony, of "two to three million." It was a neat statistic that rounded out to about 1 per cent of the U.S. population, and was intended to reflect the number of people without shelter during the course of a year.

What irritated HUD officials was that the little Western minds of the media had, by early 1984, latched onto Snyder's figure and used it—in editorials, in news stories, on TV and radio. One way or another these stories all posed the same question: If there are two million homeless, why isn't the government doing more to help them? The HUD report was Washington's answer: turn the debate about what to do into a dispute over numbers.

When Mitch Snyder and his colleagues around the country read the report, it didn't make sense to them. Many of them had been interviewed by HUD and were convinced that the numbers they'd given had been misused. Snyder angrily disputed the report's techniques as well as its findings and purposes; he said it was "a political document" intended to "mute the atmosphere of urgency" that he and others had fought to create.

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A few weeks after the report's release, Snyder accused HUD officials of fraud before a special joint hearing of the House Banking Committee's subcommittee on housing and community development and the Government Operations Committee's subcommittee on manpower and housing (which will reopen its probe of the HUD report December 4). He and other CCNV members called shelter operators around the country, including colleagues in the National Coalition for the Homeless and discovered they too were furious. Snyder organised them to join a lawsuit against further distribution of the report, the first volley in his legal war against an administration whose top officials, as he told Congress, "remind me of nothing so much as a school of piranha circling, waiting to tear the last ounce of flesh."

Snyder has a dramatic flair. In another life, years ago, he worked on Madison Avenue. But the former ad man has gone much further in combating HUD, than Secretary Samuel Pierce or his advisers must have expected. Not satisfied with discrediting the report itself, he is pursuing those whom he accuses of writing the homeless out of existence. And if the Justice Department doesn't probe his charges, Snyder says he and Lenzner will seek their own hearing before a grand jury and the appointment of a special prosecutor. In the meantime, he has convinced banking subcommittee chairman Henry Gonzalez to reopen his investigation.

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Secretary Pierce has never been a White House favorite. He is the Cabinet member who, early in his tenure, was mistaken by the president for a black mayor, and under his tenure HUD has suffered the heaviest cuts in the Reagan budgets. Pierce has also been lambasted annually on Capitol Hill for HUD's failure to assist the homeless.

In January 1984, Pierce's boss succinctly entered the debate with his own assessment on *Good Morning America*: "What we have found in this country—and maybe we're more aware of it now—is one problem that we've had, even in the best of times, and that is the people who are sleeping on the grates, the homeless who are homeless, you might say, by choice." This was the presidential reaction to a media blitz—including pictures of homeless families with small children—that took place that same month.

Pierce's response to the growing public relations problem was to study the issue. In early 1983, a HUD deputy had proposed a small study of how HUD initiatives were helping the homeless and how innovative programs in 10 cities were preventing homelessness or assisting homeless families to find permanent homes. But Pierce instead ordered HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research to formulate a national estimate of the homeless, ascertain who they were and what was being done to help them. The study was undertaken by Dr. Kathleen Peroff, then deputy director of the office's division of policy studies, and the official Mitch Snyder would later accuse of criminal perjury.

SYLVIA PLACHY

Under her direction, HUD staff and an independent consulting firm, Westat, used four techniques to estimate the total number of homeless. HUD had already decided that what they wanted was a "snapshot" of how many homeless there were on an average night in January or February 1984—a number that would certainly be lower than a count of how many people were without shelter for any extended period during a year. Many people are homeless for a few months, then stay with friends or family before they hit the street again. Others end up in jails, hospitals, or vouchered housing for periods during the year, but administration policy is to consider none of these people officially "homeless."

The derivation of social statistics such as the number of homeless, hungry, or illiterate is often difficult to comprehend. To lay readers, disputes over methodology may seem arcane or even irrelevant, but they lie at the heart of the political struggle over who should help the homeless and how much they should be helped.

HUD's estimate was an extrapolation based on previous estimates—and in a very few instances, actual headcounts—done by other agencies. Each of the four methods used was, in essence, a survey of other surveys, manipulated statistically into a national estimate:

- HUD's researchers took published estimates for 37 localities, most of them large urban areas, added them together, and divided by the combined populations of the cities surveyed. That came to one-quarter of 1 per cent of the population which, when multiplied by the total U.S. population, yielded an "outside estimate" of 586,000 homeless. HUD considered this number its least reliable, since it relied wholly upon newspaper and other published accounts, and focused on large cities where the homeless tend to be concentrated.

- Westat's employees conducted telephone interviews with 200 operators of homeless shelters in 60 cities—20 small, 20 medium, and the 20 largest—and asked dozens of questions, mainly concerned with how the shelters operate. The next to last question was: "On an average night last week, how many homeless (including those in shelters, using vouchers to live in hotels, in cars, streets, parks, etc.) would you estimate are living in this metropolitan area?" The answers were added together and extrapolated to a national figure of 353,000.

- HUD staff conducted 500 interviews in the same 60 cities, asking local officials, advocacy groups, researchers, shelter operators, social service agencies, and police departments to offer their best guess as to how many homeless were in their cities or counties. Many refused, but the answers received were analyzed for "reliability" based on the perceived experience and knowledge of the inter-

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No one on Capitol Hill, or even in the White House, has dared to cite the HUD report as a policy guide.

viewee, given a weight based on city size, and then added together and extrapolated. This figure came to 254,000.

● Three studies by local homeless advocates which attempted to count the number of people on the streets in Boston, Pittsburgh, and Phoenix, along with a 1980 census "casual count" were used to derive a national figure of 192,000.

All these methods suffered from a variety of technical, practical and even arithmetical errors, according to two statistical specialists—Eugene Ericson of Temple University and Richard Appelbaum of the University of California, Santa Barbara—who examined the report and some of the underlying documentation at Snyder's request. Several of the shelter providers and experts interviewed by HUD and Westat complained that their estimates had been misquoted or misused. Nine of the 20 largest cities were assessed on the basis of one or two local estimates. And the authors of the Boston and Phoenix studies—Valerie Lanier and Dr. Louisa Stark—blasted the report for ignoring the limitations of their estimates, such as the fact that in Boston, for example, the counters only examined a limited area and not the whole city. Lanier and Stark are plaintiffs in Snyder's lawsuit demanding that the report be withdrawn.

Ericson and Appelbaum both criticized the weighting system used by HUD, which gave the highest weight to the smallest cities surveyed, and the lowest weight to the country's five largest cities. Ericson, who assisted the city of New York in analyzing the 1980 census, told the Voice he believed this was a deliberate attempt to understate the number of homeless.

But both Ericson and Appelbaum were most vehement about what Snyder calls the "smoking gun" in HUD's calculations—an arcane geographical measure known as the "Rand-McNally Metropolitan Areas" or "RMAs," which were used by HUD to arrive at a ratio between local estimates of homelessness and the country as a whole. Each of the 60 cities surveyed for the HUD report belongs to an RMA, which is a large geographical unit, usually used for marketing purposes, similar to the better-known Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area. The New York City RMA includes the city's seven million people, plus another 10 million spread across 79 other cities in 10 counties spread across three states. The Los Angeles RMA also comprises about 90 cities; Boston includes 40 cities; Chicago's RMA stretches across three states, and includes 10 counties and 46 cities.

The problem, according to Ericson and Appelbaum, is that HUD used the RMAs this way: They took already dubious estimates of homeless populations in the surveyed cities and counties which are part, but only part, of the RMAs, added them, and used the total as the numerator in a gigantic fraction. Then they added up the total populations of the 60 RMAs, including cities which were never surveyed or surveyed only superficially, and used that total as the denominator. The resulting fraction, which supposedly represented the ratio of homeless population to total population in the 60 RMAs, was then multiplied by the entire U.S. population, supposedly yielding a national homeless figure.

Appelbaum and Ericson both say that if the estimates gathered by HUD had been applied solely to the central cities from which they were taken, and not to the RMAs, the final figures on national homelessness would have been anywhere from 2.5 to five times as high, or from 650,000 to 1.6 million. This is because the number of people in the 60 central cities surveyed is about 30 million, while the 60 RMAs have a population of 90 million.

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Peroff was obliged to defend her study in two separate forums. On May 24, 1984, she and other HUD officials and consultants testified at a joint hearing of the House Banking and Government Operations subcommittees. Six weeks later, she gave a sworn declaration as a defendant in Mitch Snyder's federal lawsuit to have the HUD report withdrawn.

Snyder and his lawyers examined both the congressional testimony and the sworn statement carefully, and he says he has found at least 13 instances of perjury by Peroff. Whether Peroff lied intentionally is a matter to be decided by a jury, but there are serious discrepancies in some of her statements—enough so that Gonzalez subcommittee director Gerald McMurray says discreetly that he "hopes HUD will be more forthcoming on how they put together the report" at next month's hearing.

Among the discrepancies is Peroff's description, in her sworn statement to the U.S. District Court, of the HUD report's definition of "homeless" and her assertion that that definition, which included homeless people temporarily in jails and hospitals, was explained to the local experts surveyed by HUD and Westat. The questionnaires used by interviewers show this isn't true, and several of those interviewed say it was never explained to them.

Most of the accusations of perjury, however, revolve around the issue of RMAs. Some of these could be dismissed as differences of interpretation, but there certainly are contradictions between the report itself, HUD's congressional testimony, and Peroff's account in her sworn statement.

Although the word "metropolitan" appears nowhere in the seven-page questionnaire strictly followed by the HUD interviewers, Peroff claimed in her sworn declaration to the U.S. District Court that they "always noted what the area basis of the estimate was so that the computation of the final metropolitan reliable range was based on: 1) an entire metropolitan figure; or 2) adding estimates obtained for separate jurisdictions within the metropolitan area." In the same declaration she also referred to the "metropolitan estimates provided in these interviews [which] resulted in a national estimate . . ." And she claimed that in the largest metro areas, such as New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Philadelphia, "calls were made by HUD staff to central cities and to all jurisdictions outside the central cities but within the RMA, to obtain additional homeless estimates for these jurisdictions." In fact, HUD interviewers did call some of the counties surrounding the central cities in each RMA, but this was far from surveying "all jurisdictions." Several of the shelter operators and other professionals interviewed by HUD disputed Peroff's assertion that "those interviewed . . . were asked only to give estimates for the particular jurisdiction within the metropolitan area which they were knowledgeable about."

The defense of the estimate for New York City, in Snyder's view, is the clearest example of an outright lie. Peroff claimed in her sworn declaration that "Forty interviews were held with persons knowledgeable about specific suburban areas in order to obtain estimates of the extent of homelessness in each of the separate jurisdictions. These separate estimates were then added to the New York City estimate to arrive at an estimate for the entire metropolitan area." Assistant HUD Secretary June Q. Koch repeated the same claim in a statement submitted to Congress.

But Appelbaum, after examining HUD's documents, could find only 32 interviews with suburban New Yorkers—and only 18 of these offered homeless estimates. The others all refused, yet the

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Why isn't the government doing more? The HUD report was Washington's answer.

jurisdictions served by their agencies were counted in the total population figures.

Peroff, who has moved from HUD to the Office of Management and Budget, is indignant at Snyder's charges and the criticism of her work. "I simply didn't perjure myself," she says. The RMA method was chosen, she says, because it best represents the country's urbanized areas where most of the homeless are located, adding that "critics of the report . . . don't have a statistical background." The smaller RMAs were given greater weight, she explained, because they had "a lesser probability of being sampled. There was a greater probability that we'd select one of the large RMAs, of which there are few, than the small RMAs, of which there are many." But nowhere in the report is the precise rationale for the weighting scheme explained—that is, why a small RMA was given 20 times the weight of a large one.

Peroff agrees that HUD only got 18 estimates for the urbanized areas outside New York's five boroughs, but insists that "we made an attempt to call every person whose name came to us and in New York City we had good statistics made available to us on the number of people in shelters." Peroff hasn't retained a lawyer to defend her; she says there's no need to. June Koch, her superior at HUD, failed to return repeated calls from the *Voice*.

On August 27, 1984, Snyder filed a formal complaint against Peroff and Koch with Joseph DiGenova, the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, alleging that the two HUD officials had committed multiple acts of conspiracy and perjury. He asked DiGenova to investigate and present his findings to a grand jury. Snyder offered evidence and witnesses to corroborate his charges, but received no reply from DiGenova. Last March, seven months after the charges were filed, Snyder again wrote to DiGenova—whose office had successfully defended HUD against Snyder's civil lawsuit in U.S. District Court.

"We were hesitant to file the complaint with you, knowing that your office was representing HUD—and still is—in U.S. District Court," noted Snyder. "We doubted that you would deal fairly—or at all—with these criminal activities, since you would be both representing *and* investigating/prosecuting the same HUD officials."

A few weeks later, Snyder got a reply from Charles Roistacher, a DiGenova assistant. Roistacher referred to his own office's declaration in defending HUD against the civil lawsuit, saying, "We responded to your complaints of flaws in the report's methodology. . . . Upon review, I have concluded that the investigation you request is not warranted."

Lenzner and the other attorneys representing CCNV charge that DiGenova's decision was tainted by a conflict of interest. Last month they asked the appeals court to exclude the U.S. Attorney's office from continuing to represent HUD in the civil suit brought last year to force the withdrawal of the report. They pointed to Roistacher's letter as proof of the conflict, protesting that "No distinction whatsoever was drawn between the U.S. Attorney's undertaking of HUD's defense in the civil action and its responsibility as a neutral, investigative body to expose criminal activity." No ruling has been handed down yet, but if the court agrees with CCNV, HUD will be forced to retain outside counsel, and DiGenova may have to reconsider Snyder's allegations of perjury and conspiracy.

Two weeks ago, Lenzner and Rowe filed a new complaint in federal court seeking an injunction to force HUD to release the records and files they requested under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) six months ago. Lenzner is also assisting congressional staff to prepare for the appearance of HUD officials for further questioning on December 4. The House subcommittees investigating the report are chaired by Texas Democrat Henry Gonzalez and Massachusetts Democrat Barney Frank, who will be trying to determine how the report was shaped, the extent of involvement, if any, of the White House, and whether HUD officials told the truth when they testified about the report after its release in May 1984.

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Although administration officials may consider him disreputable, Mitch Snyder has contacts in the White House. Before mounting his war against HUD, he met with one of them and warned that Secretary Pierce should be quietly forced to withdraw the report on homelessness. But Snyder realized the administration was committed to defending the report when the right-wing Heritage Foundation, the Reagan administration's private sector arm, tried to bolster HUD with an attack on the report's critics.

The Heritage paper, written by Anna Kondratas, seems to have done little to resuscitate the report's credibility. Local and state officials across the country told the *Voice* that HUD's estimates were useless and had not influenced their decisions about aiding the homeless. No one on Capitol Hill, in the press or even in the White House has dared to cite the report as a policy guide. In that sense, Snyder's war has already been won.

Why then have Snyder and his allies continued to press for withdrawal of the report and investigations by a grand jury and Congress? They are prompted in part by a belief that government shouldn't lie, and that if government officials do lie they should be held accountable.

Mitch Snyder has taken HUD's attempt to conceal the dimensions of homelessness and used it for the opposite end: to make us face how great a disgrace it is, and how our country is dishonored by manipulations and excuses. Most of all, he feels attention must be paid, not to numbers but to the men, women, and children we forget when we aren't forced to see them. When the city streets turn to ice, and people we ought to be caring for begin to die, maybe we'll remember what he tried to tell us. ■

Research assistance by Ellen McGarrahan

"The Village Voice", New York, December 3, 1985

The Flatbush Faster

Mitch Snyder has been labeled a "zealot" on the editorial page of the *Washington Post*, and last year the paper published an op-ed piece which called his threat to fast until he died—unless the government provided facilities for the city's homeless—"a fancy form of terrorism." But on the streets of Washington, where his face is well known, people constantly approach him to say things like "God bless you. We're praying for you."

Snyder, 42, is a high school dropout from Flatbush who began what could have been a successful Madison Avenue career in the '60s. One morning in 19[illegible], he woke up and decided he didn't like his life. Snyder left his family—he is now on good terms with his ex-wife and two grown sons—and drifted around the country for a couple of years. He was arrested in 1969, under the since-repealed Dyer Act, which made it a federal crime to ride as a passenger in a car rented with a stolen credit card. Convicted in 1970, Snyder spent most of the next two and a half years in Danbury prison, where he met Philip Berrigan, did a lot of reading, fasted for 72 days to protest the Vietnam war, and emerged in 1972 prepared for a life of commitment. Snyder says he's fasted for periods totaling about two years, sometimes for political purposes, mostly just to "cleanse my system and get in touch with those people in the world who don't have enough to eat." After one fast protesting the navy's plans to name a nuclear submarine "Corpus Christi"—literally, "Body of Christ"—Snyder nearly lost his sight. But surgeons at Johns Hopkins donated their services to save his eyes. The Navy called their sub "City of Corpus Christi," and Snyder called off his fast.

Mitch Snyder

The Community for Creative Nonviolence was founded in 1970 as a pacifist commune dedicated to resistance against the war. By the time Snyder joined them soon after his release from prison, the group had discovered "a direct equivalent at home to the war abroad"—the homeless poor. They opened a soup kitchen in 1972, and over the next couple of years established a "hospitality house" where anybody could find food and shelter. During the 1975 recession they opened their first shelter, in the living room of the commune's old house on a run-down street in northeast Washington. In addition to about 1000 volunteers who help when they can, CCNV has 50 members, mostly in their twenties and thirties. About 35 of them, including Snyder, live in the giant shelter on Second Street, which the federal government is now trying to shut down.

The confrontation over this dilapidated building, formerly Federal City College, began a few hours before President Reagan's 1983 State of the Union address, when 160 CCNV members and friends were arrested in the Capitol Rotunda where they were demonstrating to win the use of federal buildings to house the homeless. The following month, Reagan ordered HUD and the Pentagon to prepare a list of suitable buildings, but it took until December for CCNV to obtain the use of the empty college, which the feds were planning to sell the following year. With more than 800 people using the building that winter, CCNV decided that they would refuse to get out when their "lease" expired on April 1, 1984.

Government officials extended the lease, but refused CCNV's demand that the run-down shelter be renovated to make it decently habitable. On September 15, 1984, Snyder and other CCNV members began a fast that ended on November 4, with a federal commitment to transform the shelter with extensive repairs, thanks in part to the intervention of Susan Baker, wife of presidential aide James Baker.

According to Snyder, the feds have reneged on their commitment to rebuild; he wants to hold them to their promise of a "model shelter." The government says it never contemplated the $10 million worth of work Snyder has demanded. CCNV has refused to let the government make a partial repair, and the feds have responded by opening a smaller shelter in the remote Anacostia section of the city, threatening to evict the hundreds who live at the CCNV shelter.

Snyder has warned that some shelter residents, including a number of Vietnam veterans, might become violent if the government tries to throw them out. He has gone to court to forestall the eviction, which could happen within days after a ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals, which now has the case. Like the legal battle over the HUD report, the shelter dispute is, for the moment at least, a stand-off.

—J.C.

"The Village Voice", New York, December 3, 1985

The Federal Failure

Getting the Reagan administration to request funds for America's homeless is an uphill battle, but Representative Barney Frank, Democrat of Massachusetts, has a strategy. "Perhaps if someone could discover a Communist threat among the homeless . . . ," he said, Washington would be persuaded to take them seriously.

Although the administration is not exactly waging a war on poverty, the United States Armed Forces have already been pressed into service. In fiscal 1984, Congress gave the Department of Defense $8 million for the conversion of empty military structures into shelters for the homeless. When the Voice first called the Pentagon to inquire whether that $8 million had been used for homeless relief, press spokesperson Jim Trimmer said he "personally knew nothing about" that appropriation, explaining, "Eight million dollars is not very much around here."

In fact, only $900,000 of the congressional appropriation was ultimately used to provide shelters; the remaining $7.1 million was "turned back into the Army Reserve funds, where it was used for [military] construction" according to another Pentagon aide, Glenn Flood. The small amount spent as intended created nine shelters in six states. Because DOD had used only $900,000 of the original appropriation, Flood explained, this year Congress appropriated just $500,000—a far cry from the original $8 million which, although small by military standards, was significant enough to be mentioned in the HUD report on homelessness as evidence that "other Federal Agencies have also acted to address the issue."

But the DOD program is not the heavy artillery in the federal government's order of battle for the homeless. Over the past three years, Congress has allocated a total of $210 million to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide food and shelter to the homeless. These funds have in turn been distributed through agencies such as United Way and the Salvation Army. The money is spent primarily on cots, blankets and food. This distribution process is the administration's showpiece aid effort, but FEMA itself has no desire to see the program become a permanent fixture, and has neglected each year to ask Congress to renew the appropriation. So far, no funds have been formally approved to continue the food and shelter program in fiscal 1986.

Indicative of the FEMA program's makeshift nature and cosmetic intent is the fact that the appropriations have held steady at about $70 million a year over the past three years, despite documented growth in the numbers of homeless. Concern about the size of the deficit is ostensibly what has kept the funding unchanged, but the allocation process itself is arbitrary. "We determine funds by previous funding amounts rather than by statistics of need, which may or may not be accurate," said Paul Thompson, a staff assistant to the HUD appropriations subcommittee of the House.

Given the dubious accuracy of HUD's statistics, that might seem reasonable. Even the House appropriations subcommittee felt compelled to ask for a second opinion on the HUD report's conclusions, and ordered FEMA to prepare its own study last March. FEMA reported back that homelessness had increased by 16 per cent over the previous year. In September the same congressional subcommittee that had authorized the report ignored FEMA's conclusions, blindly allocating the same sum as in years past.

Since Reagan took office, his administration has drastically cut the Section-8 federally subsidized low-income housing program. At its peak Section-8 supplied $3.2 billion a year to New York State, providing rent subsidies to 47,000 low-income families. The present level of funding is sufficient for only 8000 families—a cut of over three-quarters in the number of families aided. Other federal cuts include $5.2 billion from child nutrition programs, $4.6 billion from the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program, $1.8 billion from housing assistance programs, and $6.8 billion from the food stamp program. With the decrease in federal funding for these programs, the states have been hard pressed to pick up the slack. According to HUD spokesperson Peter Centenari, "that's what the Reagan administration has been trying to do all along—to drive all of this back to the state and local level."

—Ellen McGarrahan